

# Ducking Days



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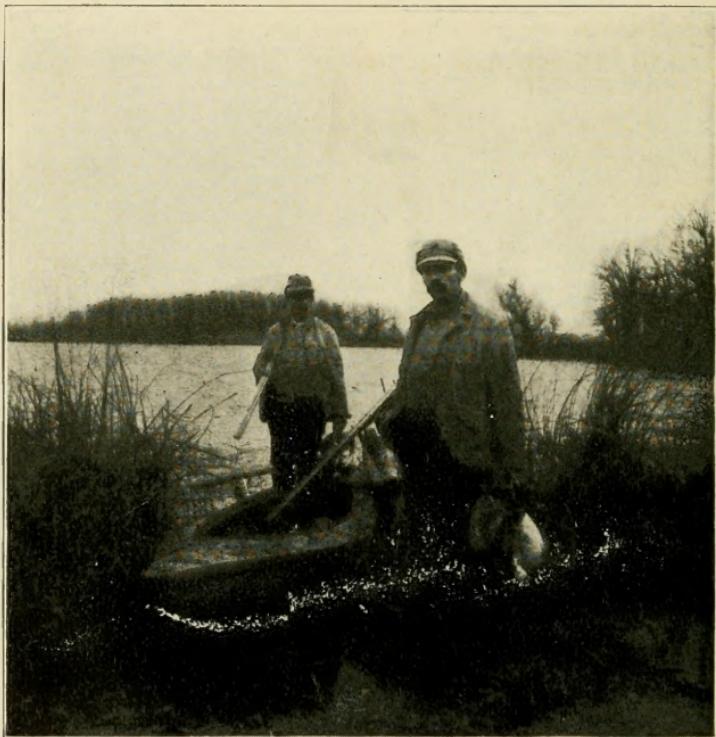
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Hybrid duck p. 23



GRAHAM BROTHERS AT LONG LAKE, ILLINOIS

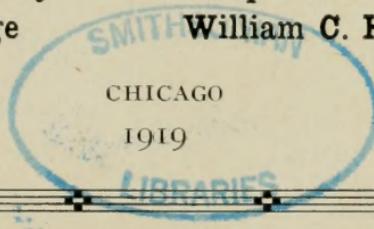
# DUCKING DAYS

Narratives of Duck Hunting, Studies of Wildfowl Life, and  
Reminiscences of Famous Marksmen on the  
Marshes and at the Traps

—BY—



Charles B. Morss	John B. Thompson
Willey S. McCrea	Rollin B. Organ
Clark McAdams	Thomas A. Marshall
Perry C. Darby	Joseph S. Rugland
Paul E. Page	William C. Hazelton





## *Dedication*

To Daniel W. Voorhees, Sr., of Peoria, Ill.,  
whose generosity, kindness and many other  
lovable personal qualities have endeared him  
to an ever-increasing circle of friends, this  
volume is dedicated as a tribute of esteem.





DANIEL W. VOORHEES, Sr.,

Peoria, Ill.

President The Duck Island Preserve.



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## *Foreword*

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WICE each year with a regularity equaled only by the seasons a great flood of aquatic bird life swings with the sun over the face of our land. They are the wildfowl who constitute this ebb and flow whose pursuit and capture meant so much to our pioneer ancestors and by the same token whose pursuit and capture still mean so much to present day generations, though in another way.

When with the passing of winter we note the arrowhead flocks dragging their harrows northward across the April skies we know them to be the welcome precursors of another vernal season; and again, when later with the dying year their ringing clangor greets our ear as they drift southward toward the land of pine and palm we know with equal certainty another winter is fast following down that flying wedge.

America is blest by a wealth of feathered game beyond that of any other country in the world and her sportsmen are in proportion. And of these millions who annually follow the field it is quite within the bounds of truth to assert that the big majority are to be found and numbered in that great brotherhood of game shots known as the fraternity of duckshooters. Nor perhaps need this be wondered at, since no class of game birds, may it be said, so excites the admiration and stimulates the interest of the average gunner as do the waterfowl.

Those who have once tasted the joys and vicissitudes incident to the pursuit and capture of these birds need no second introduction, but freely confess to its undeniable lure and fascination transcending all other forms of sport. Whether the quarry be the wild swan, the grey goose or wavey down from the polar seas, or the mallard, teal or royal canvasback out of the great nurseries of the Canadian north the game is always worth the candle to your inveterate duck hunter who asks for nothing sweeter in life than the magic and all-encompassing charm of his autumnal marshes.

True, like in everything else, the "King of Sports" has its ups and downs. Birds may not fly or decoy today, but your ever hopeful duckshooter knows the time will come when they surely will. The weather and wind, those twin essentials for complete success, may not be as propitious as he would have ordered, but sooner or later, his optimism tells him, it is bound to change for the better.

And so, whether in the bright sunlight of October days or mayhap under the dissolving skies of inclement November, it is all in the day of sportsman's toil to your "dyed in the wool" ducker, who as the wild-fowl seasons multiply over his head learns of delights and experiences such as never come within the prosaic life of the confirmed city dweller, and giving him more than ample cause as he looks back over the receding years to thank his lucky stars for the day that saw him born with a love for the gun and all that goes with it.

CHARLES B. MORSS.

Haverhill, Mass.

# The Old Point Blind

---

By "CARCAJOU"

---

There's a charm at the Old Point Blind  
When the winds go whistling by;  
There's a kiss in the autumn wind  
For my good old pards and I.

There's a line on your nose---never mind,  
'Tis neither corn nor rye,  
'Tis the seal of the Old Point Blind.  
For my good old pards and I,

There's sport of the old-fashioned kind,  
When the birds go sailing by,  
That's the charm at the Old Point Blind  
For my old good pards and I.

*Lake Koshkonong, Wisconsin*



# A Morning in a Sculling Float

\* \* \*

**CHARLES B. MORSS**



## A MORNING IN A SCULLING FLOAT

---

By Charles B. Morss

---

Far where the broad bays extend,  
Their billows to the horizon end,  
And where the honking geese and brant  
Assemble in their chosen haunt.

—*Isaac McLellan.*

---

**F**OR a week I had been cultivating my leisure and the gun at the island rendezvous of Hermit Joe. More of the former to be sure than aught else, for though we were in the duck country, the golden weather for the time being put a quietus on the sport, for ducks, like men, love to loaf and loiter under the lethargic influence of the Indian summer days of a northern Fall.

Birds were about us somewhere we knew, but so long as the weather kept above the frost line they were going to stay put, and so our float rested idly in its reedy slip from sun to sun. To the Hermit who had never graduated from the ducking school in which he had been raised, the mysteries of cover shooting were a closed book, but he nevertheless took huge delight in

tagging my heels like a dog as I now and then shot out a woodcock cover that lay just over the inlet.

“I hev jest got ter hev sum cranberries ter go long er them air snipe,” he announced one noon as we finished picking the dozen fat cock the morning’s sport had yielded. Across the lakelet stretched the bog and thither he repaired to come in at dusk with a bushel of the crimson fruit and a smashing pair of black duck which, incomparable sculler that he was, he had worked up to inch by inch with the stillness of death itself till the pair of canny fowl came just right to suit him, when, as he had expressed it, he had “mellered ‘em both out tergether ter one shot.”

Cranberries were up that year, so Joe must needs post off that night to the distant village to market his ripened freight, thereby leaving me alone to my own devices and whatever game might appear for some twenty-four hours.

With the setting sun a dead calm settled over the lonely pond and for the first time in a fortnight the evening air fairly rang with the message of the coming frost. “Ye orter hev sum ter work on cum sunup,” was the Hermit’s parting word as he pushed away into the dusk. He was right. How the birds sense the coming change. A little way to the north a real freeze was in progress and with that wonderful intuition so sensitive to weather shifts they stood not upon the order of their going but came at once.

A glowing grate within the snug confines of the shack served to keep the chill at bay and at intervals as I sat enjoying the sweet solace of a pipe of fine cut, from without came a sound as of a muffled sigh, like the low sough of the wind among the pines.

It came from the rigid wings of coasting fowl slanting low just over the shanty's rooftree as they came slipping in under the ghostly light of the late October moon. Of more than one kind were they I knew, for from first to last during the years had we killed on this little sheet so favored of wildfowl the full range of species from tiny teal to the grey November goose.

At the Hermit's back porch whose steps were nearly laved by the overflow hung the glass and with a desire to read it I opened wide the door and as the light streamed out a bunch of dusky duck went skyward from behind the chopping block, breaking the stillness with throb of heavy wing beat and racous quacking.

Morning came to look upon a world stiffened and white with hoar frost and so abrupt had been the drop from warmth to cold that the whole valley lay wrapped under a blanket of fog of astounding density. Somewhere, out in the thick of it were fat fowl, disporting and at rest. But with the most conspicuous objects blotted out at a ten-foot distance, the problem of finding them under these conditions, made the proverbial "needle in a hay-stack" proposition seem easy in comparison.

Still, in duck hunting as in other things, one never can tell what can't be done till it is attempted, and "nothing ventured nothing gained" applies with perhaps more force to wildfowling than any other branch of sport. I would chuck and chance it, and throwing off the weather covers of the float found its hay-cushioned bottom dry as a chip, and with gun, glass and shells deposited in their respective places, a single shove sufficed to bury the shore from sight.

While still upon the shingle beach of the island one could visualize in a way the general lay of the land. But once enveloped in that mystery of fog, sense of direction quickly became a thing of the past with nothing tangible to focus upon, and one guess as good as another.

Out near the entrance to the lower bay were Joe's anchored decoys. A fleet maintained to help coax down such of the wild birds, high flying, as might be inclined to pass on and hold them once they were in. In the fond belief I was progressing in their direction I sculled gently along, the meanwhile straining with expectant eye for their familiar forms. Ah! There they were. But no; decoys have heads and necks and these dark lumps show neither. They look like the toggle floats of some trotline fisherman, greatly magnified in the dense vapor, and I about so decide when from one of the lumps a snake-like head topped by a gamey head whips watchfully erect. Black duck for a dollar.

They seem petrified with astonishment at the apparition that like "Jack in the box" pops suddenly up from the midst of that innocent looking bit of floating marsh. Now is the time to get that pair with necks in line and as the shot rings out the others rocket and vanish like sprites into the fog. The faithful old double is held well above the last glimpse of a dusky form and a place shot sent in at random. An audacious shot, you say? Quite so. But not more so than is the grouse, whisked from sight behind the covert's screen on which you sometimes chance, and score.

A moment elapses and we set it down as a wasted charge when something plunges behind the misty curtain and a sound like the soft splash of wavelets upon the shore greets our ears. A few spins of the paddle in the direction and we are hauling a wise old drake over the side to the accompaniment of vigorous wing flapping and flying spray. Close to four pounds will he scale, and quite the handsomest of the whole trio.

The detonation of the heavy charges reverberate through the quietude with startling intensity and to the awakened echoes respond a multitude of sound. A fox-hound trailing on the nearby hill peals forth a bell-like note in answer. The squall of a jay mingled with the cry of the king rail runs along the enshrouded shore, while clearer than all falls the shrill scream of a hen-hawk wheeling above the autumnal woods.

As I resume the paddle a jacksnipe with saucy note cuts overhead unseen, speeding straight for the calamus stretches of the Great Slough, the only snipe ground within a hundred miles, and I marvel at the wonderful compass in that little brain that guides him so unerringly. Somewhere out on the pond a black duck sounds an alarm note and a flock of golden eyes jump for a short spin on ringing wings and I hear them plough in again at no great distance. Though the fusillade has put the fowl on the *qui vive* they will not fly in the fog. As I scull slowly along, now without the slightest idea of direction, the faintest of zephyrs starts the heavy vapor to writhing and twisting like the tenuous folds of some fairy fabric and with the very surface obscured at arm's length as with the steam from a vast caldron, one has the sensation of being afloat in midair, so complete is the illusion with nothing visible above or below.

A sudden flacker of wings and there were a dozen broadbill melting like phantoms behind the veil. I had run by the flock within a paddle's length when some sharp-eyed member descrying the moving blade at the stern had lit out in a hurry. They barely clear the water in making off and will not go far. In fact, the splash of their alighting is plainly audible in a moment, and a half turn heads the craft their way. By good luck a current of air now began to lessen the low visibility somewhat and at 20 yards the game loomed dimly



CHARLES B. MORSS,  
Haverhill, Mass.



through the mist. An extra flirt of the blade and I set up, but they are wild, and instantly, up and away. The range is too handy, however, for them to get off scot free and they barely gain headway ere a double shot pitches four birds out of the flock and to my utter surprise one proves a splendid canvasback, the first to be taken on this body of water so far as known.

Already I have with the seven birds a nice little bag under the circumstances and being quite at sea as to my location reverse my position in the float and with the hayboard for a backrest enjoy a pull at the pipe while arranging the birds and waiting for the climbing sun to bore through and burn away the fog. By degrees some treetops of familiar outline reveal themselves above the clouds of dissipating haze and I am amazed to find, instead of being far across on the opposite shore, I am still on my own side and a good mile distant down the line. But then, as one spot is about the equal of another on this sheet of water and believing a wood duck or two might be had for the flushing among the cattails that girt the pond's lower end I brought the scull about and headed out from shore once more in that direction.

The atmosphere fast clearing now before the advance of a slight breeze, the lifting mists reveal quite a scattering of birds along the course I shall pursue. A flock of four on the right appear the handiest and though a hundred yards still separate us they are evidently ducks

that have recently been shot at and hunted somewhere, for they are already swimming away, looking back continuously over their shoulders at the creeping float. To float those birds successfully to within anything like certain range before they jump means one shall have to employ much of the craft coming within the province of the sculler's art. That the scientific sculling of wildfowl is an art, dear reader rest assured. A very fascinating art indeed, mastery in which is not to be attained within a season's scope, nor yet in two.

The birds are redheads, and wild at that, which means the slightest slip will prove fatal to success. It will not do to bear down on them too hard. Let them gain a little, perhaps as is often the case their nervousness will abate thereby somewhat. The nose of the float must be kept dead on, and not a shadow of rocking accompany its progress, nor the faintest sound issue from the scull hole where the paddle handle bears upon its lubricant of fat porkrind.

All this was done and more and at the right moment a little extra elbow grease applied to the paddle handle cut the distance down to 60 yards, which proved the limit of the birds' endurance, when they lifted. A long shot truly, but a float gun should be well choked and mine being so the rear bird splashes back with a broken wing, while no result seems to follow the second shot. But hold! One of the departing trio suddenly lets go all holds and with quivering pinions drops limply into the

lake. Two No. 5 shot through the body and an internal hemorrhage have done the trick. I pick him up after running down the cripple and they are as fat as butter.

How that flock of big duck well on ahead did go into the air at the shots, though little need they have feared at my hands. They were gooseanders and it takes a strong stomach to wrestle with one, though I know of coast gunners down on the Cape who inform me they actually relish a sheldrake or two in the Spring as a sort of tonic to tone up the system after a long hard Winter.

The firing has caused several bunches to pull out for a less noisy sanctuary, while others have sought seclusion in the lake's center, but I shall keep on along the shore and chance picking up enough ere ringing the pond. Away in the distance between me and my objective point, a cluster of black dots ride the silvery surface, and being directly on our course we will give them a try. Now and then as we bear down, a bird stands on his tail and winnows his wings in air, and we note they are the large broadbill. A very good fowl to scull when not too much hunted.

These behaved extremely well and I verily believe one could have sculled right up to them, so busy and unconcerned were they as they dove and fed. But 30 yards is plenty near enough in good light and at that distance I sat up with the intention of making the most of the opportunity. As it was I came near losing out on the

entire bunch. The Hermit had left a coil of loose hay wire used in the making of drowners for his mink traps lying on the floor of the scull in which unnoticed, the gun muzzles had become entangled, and before I could free them from the incubus the birds were speeding well on their way. I could not resist a parting shot with the left barrel, however, and more by good luck certainly, than good shooting, the charge found two birds in the flock lapping, and the double kill went in with twin splashes side by side.

The above incidents were taking place in much less time than the reader has taken to peruse them and I had just broken my gun after the shot when to my astonishment a husky broadbill popped to the surface like a cork not 20 yards in front and sat for one brief moment as though carved in stone. A lone member of the flock, he had been browsing down below quite oblivious to the scene being enacted above him, and now, as he shook the water from his eyes to find himself deserted and in such imminent proximity to his deadliest enemy, his look of surprise and consternation—if a duck can be said to have such a thing as countenance—were enough to excite the risibilities of a wooden Indian. Yes, gentle reader he “lit out” as only a scared duck can and had you missed him, well, you had good excuse enough.

The haycock houses of the muskrats reared their domes in dozens along the borders of the tules, telling of good trapping soon to come with the last days of open



A SCULLING FLOAT OF THE ATLANTIC COAST.



water. Though keeping a sharp lookout, the sudden flashing of resplendent wings and quavering wee-uks wee-uks of alarm told me I had been caught napping as a wooddrake glittering like an opal sprang from the base of a rat house, offering a perfect chance at 30 yards. Shades of Tom Marshall and "Pop" Heikes! After the previous good work of the morning shall I soon forget the feeling of chagrin that convulsed me when in spite of my best efforts to stop him I had to set and watch that regal beauty depart without leaving behind so much as a single feather for my consolation. Yes, dear reader, it is a frozen fact we doubled on that bird with two perfect opportunities and failed to score where practically no skill was required. It is hard to explain, but an open secret we all do it at times.

Rounding out from the cove a bunch of golden eyes, the season's first, were diving over a gravel bar, but taking flight while still out of range, swung to the foot of the lake and well up, came heading back plainly with the intention of leaving. By cutting under with the float I was enabled to edge in near enough for a chance and wing-tipped a bird that scaled downward on a long slant at terrific speed, striking the surface with such force as sent it glissading end over end for a dozen somersaults ere it gained control and sat up; no doubt in the swift turn of affairs, the most dumbfounded duck in all duck-dom. No hesitating barrel will do for a crippled whistler

and a quick second shot rolled him over before he had recovered his breath sufficiently to begin diving.

The last leg of the route, a quarter-mile scull across the head of the pond to the home island lay before me. I had nearly circled the lake and picked up in the operation that great delight of the bird hunter, a mixed bag. And well mixed though it was, luck so willed it another variety was still to be added.

Nothing appeared until I had neared the neighborhood of the anchored stool and noted three small fowl clustered quite apart by themselves—which I at first judged in the distance to be teal. Bearing down upon the trio they began swimming smartly off, but not so fast but what one could soon manoeuvre within range. On setting up they did not rise as anticipated but pulled in together, and thinking to settle the hash of all three and “Hoverize” on my somewhat scarce ammunition at one and the same time I laid the pattern of a heavy charge from a well-choked barrel exactly on the spot occupied by the three birds at 40 yards. In my mind’s eye they were already in the float, but it was another case of counting one’s chickens ere they hatch, for every one of the little sinners went under at the crack without having received so much as a scratch. On emerging they were widely separated but headed into the home cove, and by working back and forth I finally bagged the three with as many shots, and strangely enough, as they swam with nought but their bullet heads above the surface. They were ruddy duck, the “chicken canvasback” of the South.

John Dymond, Jr.



## JOHN DYMOND, JR.

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We reproduce herewith the photograph of Mr. John Dymond, Jr., of Louisiana, one of the leading sportsmen of that State.

In 1908 Mr. Dymond organized The Delta Duck Club, located at the mouth of the Mississippi River, which club possesses probably the finest game preserve and club house of any club in the country, and by reason of the excellent hunting results there obtained, has gained a world-wide reputation. The membership of the club includes prominent sportsmen from the four corners of the United States. The club has 100 members.

The grounds of The Delta Duck Club comprise more than 50,000 acres of made land at the delta of the Mississippi River, and there are more than 100 lakes and ponds on this vast tract.

Mr. Dymond has been prominent in securing legislation, both State and Federal, for the protection of our wild migratory birds. He is the local counsel in the State of Louisiana of the Rockefeller Foundation, which has established in that State one of the largest refuges for migratory birds.

While originally from New York, by reason of his long residence in the South, Mr. Dymond has become a thorough Southerner.



JOHN DYMOND, JR.,  
New Orleans, La.  
President The Delta Duck Club,



# An Idyl of Little River

\* \* \*

**JOHN B. THOMPSON**



## AN IDYL OF LITTLE RIVER

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By John B. Thompson

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So again tonight I'm thinking,  
Days of youth, of dog and gun,  
Days of sport in times now olden,  
Long 'before life's span was run.

—Whipple.

---

**L**EEDLESS of the storm, the little, brown, weather-beaten native reposed quietly on his pallet of dirty comforts. Calling to him several times, he gave me no answer. I should have known better than to have tried to draw the attention of a Little River native to the rocking of the house. To him it was the sweetest of slumber songs—to me it was an unparalleled wind, threatening each instant to wrench the unstable structure from its flimsy, stilt-like foundation of cypress.

Anew came a fierce booming gust of wind, apparently more formidable than any of its predecessors. The shack rattled, pitched, then seemingly ashamed of its yielding that much to the elements, it dropped back with a soggy thud on its tottering piling, and rested in its original position.

Pete Godair still slept peacefully.

Suddenly after a short blow from the northwest, the wind desisted. Then all was tranquil. I lifted the latch, opened the door, and peering out into what was swart darkness a moment before, I saw the gray of day seeping slowly yet unmistakably through the hurrying gray clouds. From the east, the sounds coming across the breaks of cypress, into the water-killed tupelo gums, and wind-beaten swards of saw grass, flag and yoncopin, bore the notes of numerous bands of wildfowl already in flight.

Presently I saw Pete standing at my side, rubbing his dark eyes.

"Been windy all night, I reckon," observed Pete, as his eyes sought the open water approvingly. "Ther'll be no ducks coming into decoys except in the big holes way back in the timber."

And Pete was right, as he always was when it came to a decision on matters concerning ducks.

While paddling out into the big overflow we beheld thousands of ducks in flight, but not a single flock jumped from the water until we began to invade the heavy pin-oak timber.

We had thirty-five about as noisy decoy ducks as I had ever heard talk. Evidently they were expressing pleasure at the passing of the storm—or perhaps was it the prospects of the luscious little acorns, or the many

crustaceans to be found in the shallow water. There was a particularly garrulous hen—rather an undersized little lady—who made up in vociferousness what she lacked in proportions. She was simply prattling all the time, endeavoring her utmost as she poised in the front of the duck boat, to call every band of feathered creatures in the sky.

The locality that Pete had chosen was a round, open waterhole covering about four acres and surrounded by tupelo gums. Margining the pond was a wide bed of smartweed which stood stately and grossly rank as though no storm had visited there. Pete threw out our noisy decoys and assigned me a position in a huge cypress stump about seven feet high. There was ample room for both of us within. We were screened by the growth of sedge and foxtail grass which by some miracle apparently had grown rank in the slow-rotting stump. In the center of it where the grass was pressed down into a comfortable reposing bed it was warm to the touch of my hand, and Pete told me that just an instant before a deer had been resting there.

Hardly had those decoys started to feed when the ducks came in all at once. Peter never touched his lips to his walnut call. He didn't have to! That noisy hen did it all. Her powers were simply irresistible, for veritably she called them out of the clouds. Our scope of vision was necessarily narrowed by the tall trees. It

was a new form of shooting to me. I never saw the ducks until they swung into the opening and pitched for the decoys. Mallards predominated, so much so that we only fired at the countless scaups to keep them away from our decoys.

Whether it was the little hen or not, or the abundance of smartweed that tempted I cannot tell. But I never saw ducks pour into a pond as these did. At first it was in small flocks, then they appeared to be driven by some unseen force into our waterhole. We could not keep them out. In a half an hour what began as sport now threatened to turn into slaughter, if we persisted. We could never use half the ducks we killed, and even in that market-hunter-infested region my companion singularly was no market hunter; just a lover of the wild whose livelihood was gained from trapping and guiding outers in the swamps.

“For God’s sake stop!” Pete commanded. “We got enuff. I ‘low we won’t know what to do with what we have, ‘nd if we keep this up there won’t be no room in the boat fur them decoys.”

Then I got a history of that little decoy hen, as Pete described her: “She hain’t got the looks much of a wild mallard, but she can out-mallard any decoy that ever lived!” Pete’s statement was irrefutably beyond contradiction. She was the single living product from the mating of a tame mallard drake and a crippled hen

widgeon which the swamper had domesticated. Madam Widgeon only returned from her nest in the flag with this one youngster, and Pete said: "She was allus a hollerin' ever sence she was born, and I don't reckon she'll quit till she dies."

I am sure had that cross-bred little lady been permitted to remain two hours longer in that pond, she would have had it so packed with wildfowl that no more could crowd in. She was the last duck that we gathered, and when we put her in the bow of the heavily-laden duck boat she stood on top of a sleepy old drake, and violent cried her siren song all the way home.

Peter pushed the boat home through by a route hitherto unknown to me. Always through the heavy timber he seemed to sense the way of egress rather by instinct than sight. The grass grew taller, the timber heavier and the density of the moss beds apparently defied progress. But the native never looked, seemingly bending his head in half-somnolent state, the small craft invariably found a passageway of water in the tangles just large enough for it. Repeatedly I thought the water route had abruptly terminated, but Pete still pushed on nonchalantly and water would appear before us only in boat-length bodies, though always sufficient for our passage, and, too, we were drawing several inches more of water than is usually allotted to a duck boat on account of our big kill.

Gradually we drew close to Pete's shack. Pete threw out in the water all the decoys except my lady of the calling qualities. Evidently she was his favorite. Across the swamp in the west we heard the rattle of ditching machinery, which in a few years was destined to convert the wilderness into a land of productiveness.

I noted Pete, as he heard the sounds of the big engine cutting its way through the swamp. He was silent, pensive. His face was a study. I knew what he was thinking of, the passing away of this vast inundation into the control of man. And thoughts entered my mind quickly of what all this meant. Ducking grounds unparalleled for generations would soon feel the touch of the plowshare. Miles and miles of heavily timbered deer and turkey country would yield the staple crops of the South. With chagrin I gazed up at the sky, and saw flock after flock of mallards pitching into the willow-oak slashes. Then I turned to the little mallard hen. She was no more on the alert—her head turned half contemplatively buried in her wing. Had she, too, lost her vocal vigor at the presaging destruction of her home?

# Following the Redheads to the Gulf Coast



**CLARK McADAMS**



## FOLLOWING THE REDHEADS TO THE GULF COAST

---

By Clark McAdams

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He sees great sunsets burn and fade,  
And, through his close-set window bars,  
Tremble along the dusky wave,  
The twilight splendor of lone stars.

—*The Old Decoy Duck.*

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REDHEADS went over us even higher than usual last Fall, and when I was invited by Mr. Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., to the Gulf Coast I gladly accepted. It was late in January when we set out, the route led us down through the pine woods and red fields of Texas, and we first saw the Gulf at Corpus Christi. We had breakfast that morning at the Nueces Hotel, the dining room of which looked out on the bay. It was the first time I had seen the southern seas since I went to Panama six years ago, and I enjoyed renewing the acquaintance. Of course, a duckshooter is always looking for ducks. I saw none there through the hotel window, but I was reminded by the dancing blue waters of the great shoal of ducks I had seen in Panama Bay. I thought some of those looked like ducks I had shot at.

If so, they had forgotten it, and were friendly enough. They merely swam aside while our boat plied the bay. The boatman said he was not sure whether they had come from North or South America, which I remember had interested me. I had never thought of ducks coming this way for the Winter or going that way for the Summer. Perhaps none of us does. All the same, it is likely. It may account for the scarcity of ducks up here at times, a calculation not entering into those speculations occasionally occupying some of the finest brains we have in this country.

It was thirty miles up the coast to Rockport, where the Granada II was waiting to take up out to the shooting grounds. We were taken over there in an automobile, and we had no more than cleared the outskirts of Corpus Christi than we saw ducks in the backwater and on the flats. They were for the most part ducks which no one on the Texas Coast cares anything about—black-jacks, spoonbills and bluebills. Your Texan, I very soon found out, is not after trash of that sort, which he is very glad to return to us for what we can make of it. We passed on the way one of the great Taft ranches, so denominated on the roof of a barn in letters as broad as Brother Bill. It was a mighty flat place, and looked as if the owner must be making a lot of money at something else. I recalled that goose shooting was said to be one of the charms of that ranch, but it was good and gooseless when I went by.



JOSEPH PULITZER, JR., AND MRS. PULITZER,

St. Louis, Mo.

At Rockport, Texas.



The boat was waiting at the pier. It was a dream of a yacht—70 feet over all, carrying a captain (engineer), deckhand and colored cook. We got our licenses—it costs a non-resident \$15 to hunt in Texas—and were off down the coast. Rockport faded into the distance. Porpoises played about in the waves. The two 45-horse-power gasoline engines bowled us along at something like 12 knots, and we swept the flats with our glasses, looking for redheads.

Redheads, so I was told, feed upon a grass which grows in the shallow water, and are in these waters all Winter. They appear about the first of November, and some of them are in even before that. Unlike the mallards and pintail, which also go to that country, they do not seem to require fresh water, and cannot be shot around the fresh-water ponds, where most of the mallards and geese are killed. Pintail especially are numerous on the coast. My impression from many years of observation that there are more pintail than all other kinds of ducks combined, was borne out by the captain, Clarence Armstrong, who had been a market hunter on the Texas Coast, as was his father before him. He said it was something like that.

We found redheads at noon, and having had our lunch we went ashore in a launch, leaving the Granada II at anchor. The usual method of hunting down there is to take a rowboat, which is pulled up on the beach

where the ducks were feeding, make a blind around the boat of sweet bay, and shoot over blocks. We had seventy blocks, all redheads. It was not long before the ducks began to come back. They came in flocks—big, little and middling. The redhead is first cousin to the canvasback, and except for its stockier build is easily mistaken for the canvasback. Redheads are what Ben Harrison used to come out to Havana, Illinois, to shoot when he was President. Grover Cleveland, like most of us, shot anything with a duck bill, but Ben Harrison wanted what he wanted. The redhead decoys very much like a mallard, but comes in to decoys as a rule with a single turn when it is coming down wind, or straight in like a teal upwind. It is a prince of ducks, a beauty in the air, a delectable dish. Its failure to weave around in the sky and first reconnoiter all the surroundings, as a mallard does, enables it to take by surprise for a bit one who isn't accustomed to its habit. I used a double-barreled gun, and learned after a little occasionally to get two with one barrel, making possible three. I didn't always do that, but it was what I was trying to do when I didn't. You get me, I guess.

We were content with little that first afternoon, and had redhead for dinner. Some dinner, that. We had sea trout, and whatever else the fat of the coast provided. Then we lighted our pipes and talked about the things duckshooters like. There would, of course, be

more ducks in the morning. I asked the captain how ducks were holding out in that country. Not well, he said. Year by year they decrease in number. Texas permits one to kill fifteen in a day. Non-residents may take out forty-five. Market hunting, so I was told, is dead in that country. I was glad to hear that. Market hunting is what we are all fighting. There will always be ducks if we can stop that. The captain said a single hunter often kills hundreds in a day, when there was money in it.

It was good to sleep on the yacht that night. A norther had swooped down on us at sunset, filling the north sky with a great mass of black cloud and dropping the temperature until the wind cut to the bone. It blew pretty much all night, but the yacht merely rolled at her anchor, doing her best to lull us to sleep. I had never experienced a norther before. It is all that Andy Adams or any other historian of that far country has ever claimed for it.

The next morning was cool, with a cloud-shot and duckless sky. Looking over to the flat where the ducks had been the night before, I thought of my own quatrain, expressing what we have all experienced:

It is to laugh. Someone has killed them all,  
And nothing answers to my plaintive call;  
Nor would respond, though I should blow a blast  
The like of which cost Jericho her wall.

We weighed anchor after breakfast, and set off down the coast, following that picturesque inner channel which threads its way behind the sand dunes marking the rim of the Gulf. We passed through Aransas Pass, where the tarpon are, and saw a Mexican ship pumping out. There, too, we looked through a channel to the Gulf, where the white-caps were dancing and the flying fishes were playing. Below Aransas we found a flat covered with waterfowl. There were great banks of snowy pelicans. All the redheads left were apparently holding a convention at which ways and means were doubtless being discussed to save the species. We first had lunch, and while we ate, a little bunch of bluebills sported in the water beside the yacht. They were as tame as coots, it being quite well understood that they were not what we were after. After lunch we put off for the flat, rigged up our blind around the rowboat, and sent the launch down the bay to stir up the ducks. That was Corpus Bay, eighteen miles across, a blue and beautiful body of water. It was Paradise for a duckshooter. The willet, which we do not have here, but which is a favorite shore bird in the East, continually flew past us with its beautiful plover call and its attractive white-banded spread of wing.

We had one of our finest shoots that afternoon, quitting with thirty. The redhead is called to attract its attention to the decoys. It flies close to the water, and

can go by without seeing the blocks unless its attention is attracted to them. If you can make a noise like a redheaded woodpecker getting grubs out of a hollow tree you can swing the redheads in. Our boatman could do it. We couldn't. When we tried it the redheads laughed, swung out and went by on the outside, the red polls of the drakes flashing in the sunlight and their black ruffs giving them the appearance of so many wild dandies.

That night we went out under the tender moon and ran a line for fresh trout. These safely aboard, we reveled in the loveliness of the night, to rest up long and to rest us sweetly. The next day was the South at its best, a dream day in which the air seemed scarcely to stir, in which the cormorants all decided to go somewhere north of us to better fishing, and innumerable plover of every sort and kind, ran about on the oyster shells and made melodious the air. That day the fishing boats passed us with all sails set and a man at the top of the main mast looking for schools. We enjoyed that day, as any duckshooter can, for love of the great outdoors itself. Ducks were an incident, and they were careful to make themselves incidental. We saw few, and killed fewer. At night we were told about goose shooting at the fresh-water ponds. The goose comes to that coast in abundance—Canadas, brant, snow geese—blue geese even. They are not hard to kill. The hunters shoot them with sixes. One can always have a good

hunt down there—but we were after redheads. Ducks, by the way, are mostly shot with seven and a halves. In three years, they have not had a good rain on that coast. The fresh water is consequently scarce, and the few ponds remaining were all used by geese, pintail and mallards.

The Texas hunters, so far as I could hear, are in favor of the federal law on migratory birds. The Texas season has been made to conform to the federal season. There, where birds are always present in season, they want to keep up the supply. It was a new experience to me to be in country where the hunters felt that way about it. Alas! if we could all feel that way about it. We like to say here that the South has the better of it—that in the ninety days it has for shooting it has the birds every day, which far exceeds the sport we get in 105 days. That is true, too; but is it a condition that we can ever hope to equalize between a watered country like that, in which the birds winter, and a dry country like this, through which the birds merely pass and in which shooting is both spasmodic and fortuitous?

The Texas coast is a duckshooter's paradise in Winter. I saw what I thought was a world of ducks, but nothing like the number one usually sees, so I was told.

Our best shoot, I thought, occurred on the last day, when we sailed all morning and located a shoal of ducks

at noon. We put off at 2 o'clock, and were set by 2:30. The wind blew hard from the northeast. The redhead is a bullet on that sort of a day. It is quite possible to shoot all the way from five to fifteen feet behind one of them going downwind, and it takes marksmanship to snatch them out of the sky when they are turning and twisting this way and that. We were getting our shooting caps on at that particular sport by this time, and you know how good it feels? It makes tobacco taste good. It makes duckshooting what it can be. It makes one's blood tingle. The shells seem to be right. Your gun is a dandy. It was fun to watch Brownie watching the winged ducks swim under water—now leaping at them and sousing his head under—now looking around puzzled to see where the thing had got to. Then we chewed the sweet bay leaves, which are the same bay leaves we have always tasted in soup. We enjoyed that shoot, and yelled like boys at a happy hit. We killed twenty-five redheads—but it was just as I have always thought—it isn't the bag that counts, but the way they come.

The season ended the day we got back to Rockport. It was the last day of January. All the hunting boats were in, the hunters were getting their blocks in the boxes and hauling them up town. The boys were already talking of fishing. The hunting had passed. I liked that. It looked like good sportsmanship, which is one of the things for which all true sportsmen should stand.

Pile up the pine and hemlock boughs,  
Send up the starry shower;  
Ten days of wildwood friendship be  
Concentrated in this hour.

—*Thompson.*

THE "MARGUERITE."

"The Greyhound of the Illinois River."





# The Greyhound of the Illinois River and the Duck Island Club



**TOM A. MARSHALL**



## THE GREYHOUND OF THE ILLINOIS RIVER AND THE DUCK ISLAND CLUB

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By Tom A. Marshall

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Gently sings the running water  
By my camp beneath the trees,  
And I hear the soothing rustle  
As the night wind stirs the leaves.

—*Whipple.*

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THE greyhound of the Illinois River! That is the "Marguerite," a power boat, 40 feet long, 4 feet of beam, drawing 26 inches of water when driven ahead by a 150 H. P. engine, turning a 22-inch propeller 800 revolutions per minute.

This model of beauty lay at her dock in Peoria, tugging at her leashes, anxious to jump out and try conclusions with the rapid flowing current of the Illinois River. Dannie Voorhees, Jr., owner and operator of this distance eliminator, was busy adjusting and tuning up his engines and soon had her striking on the six cylinders.

Walking forward, I had a good view of her bow, sharp as a knife, also her graceful and symmetrical body, lines

that the most critical boat maker or builder would go into ecstasies over.

“All aboard!” was the call for which we were waiting. D. R. Lewis, president of the Hibernian Bank of Chicago; Dr. Thomas Henry Lewis, also of Chicago; Dan W. Voorhees, Sr., president of the Duck Island Club and Illinois State Sportsmen’s Association; Dan Voorhees, Jr., and the writer, were seated in most comfortable chairs aft, while Uncle Dan Voorhees took the wheel with the confidence of Mark Twain piloting a lower Mississippi River steamboat.

When Dannie, Jr., turned her over there was a machine effect from the engine. “Cast off!” came the command. The “Marguerite” made a most graceful circle, then straightened out for a thirty-four-mile down stream run to Duck Island Club. Our boat responded to her engines, fairly raising her nose from the water as she rushed under the numerous Peoria bridges. Pekin was soon sighted and fourteen miles of the distance was negotiated.

#### **Trouble in Passing “City of Peoria”**

The steamer City of Peoria was soon met on her up trip. She was on shoal water and drawing an immense ground swell. Our boat fairly jumped at the waves, skipping the tops of some and cutting directly through others. We were compelled to shut down our engines until we again entered untroubled waters.



SECTIONAL VIEW OF DUCK ISLAND PRESERVE CLUB HOUSE.



A miniature geyser shot up from the bow, directly between the water rainbows which were turning from her nose on each side. "A leaf," was Dan's laconic grunt and the engines were again slowed down, the boat given a sudden turn, and the leaf released.

Pekin, with its idle distilleries and active fishing industries, was only a glance as we rushed by. High bluffs, swamps and likely shooting ponds (but no ducks), were passed in rapid succession. Levees, small towns and mining hamlets, fishing boats and fisherman's cabins were a fleeting panorama.

We jumped a few ducks from the river. Every available point was occupied by a hunter, who was always surrounded by decoys, but apparently getting no birds, his discordant efforts on his call seeming to add to the fright of the ducks.

#### **Royal Welcome at the Duck Island Club**

Locks at Copperas Creek were sighted in the distance. The stage of water was good, and we went over the top of the dam with a wild rush, leaving a far-reaching trail of foaming water behind. Where were the Illinois River ducks of ye olden days, when they floated upon the river by the millions? I began to feel that time or weather was not propitious for duck hunting.

We headed into a chute about a quarter of a mile down and came to the dock of the clubhouse. As a reception committee we found W. D. Allen, ex-Mayor of Peoria;

Senator Alderson of Pekin; C. J. Sammis of Peoria and the congenial club care taker, John Rogers, with a number of pushers to care for our baggage. Were we cold? Think of splitting thirty-four miles of wind and water in one hour and ten minutes! Well, I guess we were chilly, and took great comfort in backing up to the immense fireplace, with a fire built as a welcome, accompanied by proper accessories of hospitality.

It was not noon, yet all members had been out in the marsh, returning with their limit of fifteen birds. That listened good to me.

#### **Ducks of Every Species**

An elegant duck dinner was served at noon. Clothes were then donned which camouflaged nicely with our buck brush surroundings and we walked to the big lake 200 yards from the clubhouse—a lake two and one-half miles long, one mile wide.

The surface of the lake was black with ducks of every species. They were feeding on the wild rice and celery, with smartweed for dessert. The shore in all directions was covered with smartweeds, which extended well out into the lake, forming the smartweed flats, so attractive to duckdom. At the entrance to the dredged ditch, which leads from the lake to the clubhouse, is a tower for observation. Hunters ascend this to locate the ducks in their timber feeding grounds.

We pushed out from the shore in a twelve-foot punt boat, headed down the big lake to the cutoff at the head of Mink Island, then across to Willow flat, where our decoys were set in a small opening in the buck brush. With our block decoys we had a couple of live ducks which we anchored just outside of sight of each other. This induced an incessant calling of a most seductive character for passing ducks. Mallards commenced circling about our decoys, reluctant to alight until sufficiently urged by our tame ducks, which seemed to take delight in inveigling their distant kin folk into the danger zone. Ducks did not seem to come very rapidly, but I was working on every opportunity most industriously.

"Three more and you will have your limit," said the pusher, at the same time giving a few purrs on the call, which brought an old greenhead in over the decoys. Two more were then needed to complete the day. A pair came dashing in and we had our allotted number.

Uncle Dan arrived while we were picking up. "Got my limit," was his answer to my inquiry about his success. We returned to the clubhouse, arriving before 4 p. m. The Lewis brothers, who had been shooting together, had also arrived with their limit of birds.

The purpling twilight's melting blue  
Is fading with its transient hue;  
The red cloud that erewhile did float  
The heavenly vault like a painted boat.

—*Isaac McLellan.*

# A Study of Ducks Above the Clouds



**TOM A. MARSHALL**



## A STUDY OF DUCKS ABOVE THE CLOUDS

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By Tom A. Marshall

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The stalking trapper scales the stony height,  
And daring soldier from the frontier fort  
Climbs the steep cliff, and creeps from rock to rock,  
And from some grassy rampart fires the shot.

—Isaac McLellan.

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**W**OULDN'T you like to visit Crater Lake, an inland body of water, resting placidly in the interior of an extinct volcano, 6,177 feet above the level of the Pacific Ocean? It nestles in the heart of the Cascade Mountains in southern Oregon, and is accessible by an 81-mile automobile drive over the most excellent government highway, through Crater Lake National Park.

This is the most awe inspiring and remarkable inland body of water in the known world. It is six miles across, with an official depth of 1,996 feet. Its waters are clear with a color shading from a dark midnight to a light ultramarine blue—a lake in the top of a mountain, occupying the crater of a burnt out, but once active, volcano!

It is of the ducks and their behavior above the clouds that I am about to tell you. Birds in their migratory

flight (usually at a great altitude) become bewildered at the sight of a seductive lake in the heavens. They seem to be inspired with the same feeling of intense interest and awe which possesses mankind when they first look upon the face of Crater Lake.

The wonder, surprise and amazement of our feathered friends was depicted in their "killing flight," uncertainty of locality and unwillingness to alight on a body of water that was so misplaced and difficult of access for them. Every movement they made truly denoted indecision and alarm. At the time I arrived at the crater a blinding snowstorm shut out the view. The atmosphere was very "snappy" and bracing—a temperature that starts one's blood rapidly coursing through the veins and his chest to expand as the uncanned ozone was inhaled.

As I walked up to the rim the veil of snow was dissipated by the appearance of the sun breaking through the mist and glinting down upon a bank of settling clouds one-half mile away, which to the eye was impenetrable. Shafts of light were seen dancing upon the surface of the water 2,000 feet below the point I was then standing on, anchored in awe and amazement.

Circling around the walls of the crater, a flock of mallards were on a tour of inspection. They swung near my vantage point, their kaleidoscopic colorings flashing in the reflected sunlight as they made their spiral glides, dips and counter flights. Every move they made was

indicative of uncertainty in the water's invitation to alight and rest.

Their behavior was very different from the ducks I had watched circling near sea level when they were in search of a sanctuary. With great interest I watched them descend, only to arise again and circle the crater in search of greater safety. This was repeated many times. Finally an old greenhead took the lead, apparently being freighted with a spirit of desperation.

Pointing his wings, with his feet extended, he slowly volplaned down and landed upon the placid waters of Crater Lake, quietly followed by his extensive family. They were unquestionably imbued with the same feeling which possessed the writer—enchanted and spellbound with the mystery and strangeness of their surroundings.

A step nearer the rim of the crater and I became obsessed with a spirit of witchery. My hand grasped a manzineta bush and I swung farther out over that awful chasm. As I gazed down that apparently perpendicular cliff the sensations of falling from a dizzy height were upon me. The same mental condition prevailed that I experienced when my first aeroplane glide was made to earth from an altitude of a half mile. It was a feeling of goneness, accompanied by a complete loss of breath. We have all experienced the same combination in our dreams.

Why are you doubtful—why tarry so long,  
When the god of the wanderlust calls?  
The gypsy-road trails through the perfume of dusk,  
When the purple of night softly falls.

—*Pitt.*

# Days on the Illinois

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**WILLIAM C. HAZELTON**



## DAYS ON THE ILLINOIS

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By William C. Hazelton

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Do you know the blackened timber—do you know that racing stream  
With the raw, right-angled log-jam at the end;  
And the bar of sun-warmed shingle where a man may bask and dream  
To the click of shod canoe-poles round the bend?

—Kipling.

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**H**OW would you like to journey down the grand old Illinois River for a week in the glorious Autumn weather, visiting with the river people, and bagging a few ducks on the way? Well, I did it in October, 1917, and had one of the most enjoyable times of my life.

I started at Morris, ten miles below the junction of the Kankakee and Des Plaines Rivers, and ended my trip at Liverpool, 180 miles down the river, rowing the entire distance alone, except going through Peoria Lake. I thus combined the pleasures of both travel and hunting. I fully realize that many hunters would not attempt this. They think it too far to row a boat, especially on a river so large as the Illinois. It is true there is a big expanse of water at some points and you are liable to encounter severe storms at this season of

the year. The journey took me five days and a half, facing a head wind three days. Rowing, swimming and shooting are my favorite sports, so why fear a little work with the oars? I had a very light running boat, which made it much easier for me. My hands never blister when using the proper kind of a boat. While coming down the river I cut across on the long bends when the wind was not blowing too strong.

The total length of the Illinois River until it reaches the Mississippi is approximately 300 miles, and I journeyed nearly two-thirds of the distance.

I traveled light, Indian fashion, and alone. You know what Kipling says:

Down to Gehenna,  
Or up to the throne,  
He travels the fastest,  
Who travels alone.

My equipment was a boat that I had used for three years, and was not afraid to buck any stretch of water in; a gun, and one small grip containing a few boxes of shells and some warm articles of clothing to use in case of necessity. No decoys, as I did not intend to do any decoy shooting on the way, and knew I could rent decoys down the river.

When I started out I expected to stop at a hotel each night at a town on the river. I soon found this was impracticable. I slept in a stack of timothy hay the first

night. Darkness would often overtake me several miles from the nearest town. At Henry only I remained over night at a hotel. I generally stopped at cabin boats on the river with hunters and fishermen. I enjoyed doing this. A sort of Don Quixote of the river, seeking adventures on the way.

It was a beautiful day when I started and I bagged my first ducks at Sugar Island, a pair of mallards near the upper end, and further along a third one. I missed one shot at a pair. (I use a double gun. No pump or automatic for me.)

Sugar Island is one of the finest islands on the river. It is high ground, never affected by overflows, and there is always game of different kinds there.

There had been a severe storm a few days earlier, driving the birds down from the North, and there were a number of nice flocks of mallards along every little ways, and a few bluebills.

I here explain that on the lower river the ducks do not (except sometimes bluebills or other deep-water ducks) frequent the main channel of the river at all, and often do not follow its course except generally when flying. On the upper river they frequent the main channel, mallards and all other varieties more or less.

That night, at the end of my first day's journey, while resting in a hay stack up on the river bank in the moon-

light at a deserted farmhouse, I was delighted with my experiences during the day. I had enjoyed myself and had ten ducks—eight mallards and two bluebills. There was a stiff breeze blowing up the river, and night overtook me three miles from Marseilles, hence the hay stack. It was the shortest run I made any day on the trip, only twelve miles. That night about 9 o'clock a flock of geese flew over me within forty yards. I could see their markings very plainly.

During the night I had two callers, first a horse and later a dog. The horse was feeding along the grassy river bank. Nearing my resting place and on my hearing him and rising up out of the hay, he ran away snorting, a badly frightened horse. I know he thought he had seen a ghost at that deserted farmhouse.

From Marseilles to Ottawa I used the canal for eight miles, as there is a big dam there. At Ottawa I transferred my boat to the Fox River, thence into the Illinois, reaching Peru that night. It was a fine day for traveling, but I only saw one duck during the day, quite a contrast to the day previous. I sent some ducks back to Chicago from Marseilles so some of my friends could have roast duck for Sunday dinner.

Above Lacon a couple of miles I had an interesting half-hour's chat with a Catholic priest (an Englishman), who was shooting over the most lifelike decoys I saw

anywhere during the season. They belonged to one of his parishioners. Good decoys are a hobby of mine.

Going through Peoria Lake I loaded my boat on the steamer David Swain at Chillicothe and took passage for Peoria, 18 miles distant, to avoid pulling against a strong wind blowing up the lake. I had a fine view of the lake from the upper deck of the steamer, and saw many flocks of bluebills, a few redheads and canvasbacks, a sample of what was to come. Also countless coots or mudhens. The river is a mile wide or more along this part of its course.

I passed many interesting views on the river. Starved Rock, Buffalo Rock, Senachwine Lake (where T. S. Van Dyke, "the historian of the Illinois River," did some of his first duck shooting), the beautiful Sister Islands near Henry, the Copperas Creek dam, and finally the picturesque little town of Liverpool located on an island in the Illinois, being ten miles from a railroad.

About two miles above Chillicothe I heard mallards calling loudly on a lake just back of the trees along the river bank. Cutting across a big bend in the river to a fisherman's cabin-boat (he had a large assortment of boats and nets), I said to him: "What are all those ducks over there making such a noise about? Are they decoys?" "No," he said, "they are wild mallards, and there are thousands of them. They are shooting over

on the other side of the river today at the Chicago Gun Club preserve, and many of the ducks are over here." They paid no attention to the shooting on the other side of the river, and little flocks were constantly crossing back and forth. I got up on the river bank and took a look at them and there were ducks for a half mile, quacking away and enjoying themselves. It was getting late and I went on down the river to find a lodging place.

Hundreds of people live on the river the year around, earning their livelihood by fishing, hunting and trapping, particularly fishing. There are many quaint characters to be met among them. Once a river man, always a river man. Many have families. I interviewed some of them.

"How long have you been on the river," I said to a grizzled old fellow at Chillicothe. "Sixty-five years," he answered. A little later he started telling me about old Joe Carroll, the shooting pardner of Fred Kimble and Joseph W. Long. You may imagine with what interest I listened. Long's words came to my memory: "How well I remember old Joe Carroll, the best duck shot by all odds I ever met. What a slim chance a duck had for its life after once approaching him within gunshot!" Long speaks in an equally complimentary way of Kimble's marksmanship. Fred Kimble was also an expert musician, and could whistle in an artistic manner.

I passed several nights on cabin-boats and enjoyed visiting with the river people. They are veritable water gypsies and many of them have lived on the Mississippi, Arkansas, Ohio, Tennessee, Missouri and other large rivers, traveling from one to the other. Many were formerly market hunters.

I passed several duck preserves owned by various clubs. The Chicago Gun Club, the Green Wing Club, the Princeton Club, Duck Island Club and others. The Duck Island preserve of 2,000 acres is located 5 miles above Liverpool. These preserves are highly beneficial in keeping birds on the river, as they are a refuge and the preserves are not allowed to be overshot.

The lakes along the river, or overflow, as I call it, greatly resemble Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee, thousands of dead trees and stumps protruding from the water. The water acts as a preservative. Owing to the added volume of water coming down the river from the Chicago drainage canal the area of flooded land is greater than formerly.

Altogether I was infatuated with my trip and would not have missed the experiences for a great deal.

When the ducking season again returns I have hopes that I can be on the grand old river and hear the call of the wild ducks, the rifle-like crack of nitro powder and the whir of the wings of wildfowl. That is the life and the only life!

So again tonight I'm thinking,  
Days of youth, of dog and gun,  
Days of sport in days now olden,  
Long before life's span was run.

—*Whipple.*

# William H. Wallace

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## **WILLIAM H. WALLACE**

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Mr. William H. Wallace, of Saginaw, Michigan, has accomplished much in the way of conservation and propagation of wild water fowl, as well as of other game. He has devoted much study to this subject.

Heisterman Island, a tract of 390 acres of hard land and marsh, lying about four miles from Bay Port in Wild Fowl Bay, is owned by Mr. Wallace. This island lies directly north of the big State marsh, in Saginaw Bay, owned by the State of Michigan. Heisterman Island, and Maison Island, of 196 acres, nearby, also owned by Mr. Wallace, are ideal for the breeding of duck and the owner has at considerable expense by protection and the planting of duck foods, added to it as a breeding place for wildfowl. A herd of deer also range the island in peace and security.

Multifarious business cares preclude frequent visits to these ideal resorts, but his club house in season is ever at the service of his friends.

Mr. Wallace has recently been elected a member of the Public Domain Commission, which directs the work of the Michigan State Game, Fish and Forest Fire Department. The Commission is to be congratulated upon having as one of its members a man who so thoroughly understands this great question of conservation and propagation of our wild life.



WILLIAM H. WALLACE.

Saginaw, Mich.

Public Domain Commission.



# Jack Miner--Natural Naturalist



WILLEY S. McCREA





**JACK MINER,**

Kingsville, Ontario, Canada.

Wild Goose Specialist.

He has more practical knowledge of their habits than any man in the world.



## JACK MINER—NATURAL NATURALIST

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By Willey S. McCrea

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In dreams of the night I hear the call  
Of wild geese scudding across the lake,  
In dreams I see the old convent wall,  
Where Ottawa's waters surge and break.

—Drummond.

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THE subject of this sketch occupies a decidedly novel position in the wild game-loving world. Born in the State of Ohio, he went with his father, who took a large family and settled in Canada about twenty miles southeast of Windsor when Jack was a lad of 13. That was some forty years ago when that section of Ontario was a dense forest. The Miner family started to hew out a home in surroundings that were absolutely ideal for any sport-loving boy. He and a brother some years his senior aided in every way to help change a wilderness into a prosperous farming country. As a means of helping they soon began shoot-

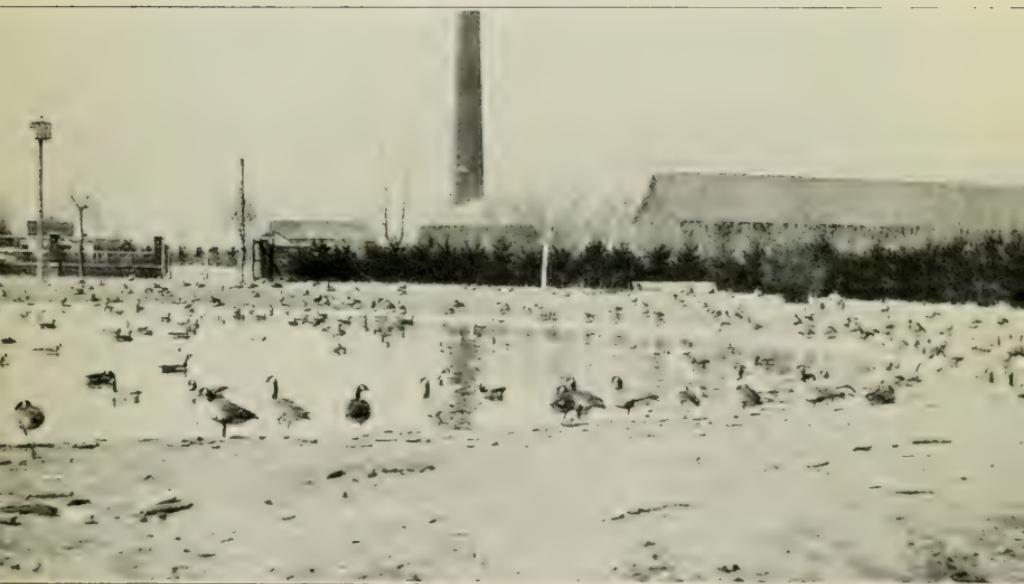
ing for the market and for many years earned considerable money in that way. An unfortunate accident to the brother turned Miner's thoughts into a different channel, and, as the country was cleared, offering a feeding and resting place for vast numbers of wild geese on their annual migrations, he hit upon the idea of trying to get them to visit his place. Originally the effort was somewhat with the idea of sport, but this was soon turned to helping along the conservation movement.

Having added to farming the manufacture of brick and drainage tile, he found the pools made in excavating clay needed for that industry convenient for his purpose. In 1904 he purchased a few wild geese and placed them at a pond which was actually located in his dooryard with his home and outbuildings on one side, and the tile factory not more than 500 or 600 feet away on another. Not until 1908 were his efforts rewarded and then but slightly. In that year sixteen called, of which six were shot. In 1909 about thirty-five appeared, from which number eight or ten were secured. In 1910 about 350 are estimated to have called during their Spring flight to the North. A few were shot that year, but very early that season it was decided to do no more killing, and since that time he has been overrun with visitors now that they are convinced of the sincerity of his hospitality.





Public highway is in front of yard  
at left of picture.



Showing pond and part of tile factory.

Latter about 500 feet from house.



They come into the pond in great numbers and allow even strangers to approach within a few feet of them while they are feeding or resting. This enclosure is not to exceed 250 feet square. The pool, which has recently been slightly improved by a cement curb, is about 150 feet long and 110 feet wide. It is estimated that frequently there are from eight hundred to a thousand birds there at a time. At a distance of not more than 200 yards is a second pool to which the birds come in somewhat larger numbers. At this pool, curiously enough, the birds will not permit anyone sufficiently near for photographing, while many of those flushed at the time will circle and go into the dooryard pond where they can be approached within a few feet without being disturbed. The accompanying photographs were taken by an amateur standing within ten feet of the edge of the pond and without a blind of any sort.

On Sundays and holidays scores of automobiles and hundreds of people frequently visit Miner's unique preserve, and the geese come and go exactly as on other days during their stay. Miner has tagged quite a number of these geese with a brass leg band, having had the permission of the Canadian Government to trap as many as he chose and mark them in that way. He has also tagged many wild mallards and from these and the geese has had returns of large numbers of his marks

from places showing that the birds follow a rather clearly defined track in their journeyings backward and forward from the nesting grounds in the North to their winter home in the South. Miner has had practically no financial assistance in his work, and only very recently has the Canadian Government given any particular help. Early in 1918 the authorities established a preserve about four square miles in extent, the center of which is Miner's property.

He gives much credit to the sportsmen of his home town, particularly to the boys, for quiet help they have afforded in not shooting too near his property. A few years ago Henry Ford's people took some fine moving pictures at Miner's place; and Miner gives a most entertaining lecture, using the films and slides to illustrate what he has done. Miner himself is a real sportsman. For thirty-one years in succession he, oftentimes accompanied by his whole family, has visited a camp in the Canadian woods, where they have secured all the trophies and pleasures ever found by people who love the great outdoors. What he has to show is absolutely unique and is well worth a visit during the season.

In the Spring the geese are there for seven or eight weeks, depending somewhat upon weather conditions. One stormy day last March nearly 3,000 geese arrived in one day. In the Fall the visitors are much fewer in



INCOMING BIRDS WHEN PHOTOGRAPHER IS IN FULL VIEW.



number and remain but a short time.

The half-tones are from snap shots by an amateur and if studied a little will show how near the Miner family live to their welcome guests.

Certain individual birds and flocks, with their young, have been identified as returning several successive seasons; one bird in particular, a hen mallard named Delilah, bred by Miner, has just returned for the sixth time. She spends each summer at her birthplace and has raised thirty-four ducklings at the home pond.

Another female mallard named Polly has accompanied Delilah several seasons. From Delilah and Polly, who have raised their broods year after year, always taking them South in the Fall, and other birds tagged at his place, Miner has learned that wild ducks in going to the South and back each year lose about 40 per cent. of their number. They all seem to go South by way of the east coast.

So far as Jack knows, none of the migrants tagged at his place has ever visited the Pacific Coast.

An interesting aspect of the recurring visits of these birds is the instinct, sagacity and reasoning powers displayed in returning, knowing that they will obtain food and may rest unmolested on their long journeys.

It is plain that our waterfowl should be credited with much more intelligence than has generally been accorded them.

Gun and dog, my worldly treasures,  
Friends of many days like these,  
Close beside me, always trusty,  
With me there beneath the trees.

—*Whipple.*

# Wild Ducks at Lake Merritt

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**JOSEPH S. RUGLAND**



## WILD DUCKS AT LAKE MERRITT, CALIFORNIA

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By Joseph S. Rugland

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Oh the fire-flash and the star-dust and the wind among the leaves,  
And the mystery of all the secret night;  
And the beauty close about us that our mother Nature weaves,  
And the sweetness that she pours for our delight.

—*Fiske.*

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TOWARDS the last of January each season, as if realizing that the duck season is nearing its end, the great flocks of ducks which make Lake Merritt their winter home annually, are preparing to leave their beautiful haven for the north. Daily large numbers fly off towards colder weather.

The park directors each year reserve the entire northern area of the lake as the home of the wild ducks that remain here for the winter. Signs are erected across the entrance to the northern arm forbidding hunters to encroach upon the preserve for the city's feathered pets.

Employees of the city's park department have fed the birds twice daily until this season (1919). Thousands of visitors have been attracted to the lake by the

sight of these large numbers of waterfowl. This year they have not been fed, owing to the orders of Hoover & Co. Still there have been thousands of birds frequenting the neighborhood of the lake. The bay is full of bluebill, many thousands being in the shallow waters off Berkeley shore. One marvels at their boldness in venturing so close to civilization.

“The ducks are beginning to leave,” said Lee Kerfoot, superintendent of the parks. “It may seem odd, but it is nevertheless a fact that the ducks begin to leave here each year as the hunting season nears its end. They come here in the autumn, just before the hunting season opens. Instinct undoubtedly warns them of the approaching slaughter and instinct tells them that they will be protected from all harm in the waters of Lake Merritt. I have watched them year after year and know that this is true.

“This annual pilgrimage of the ducks is one of Oakland’s greatest features and has received the admiring comment of thousands of out-of-town people who visit the city during the winter months.”

#### **California Bags**

I have lately returned from a trip to Merced County, California, the home of the fresh-water ducks. Here I shot out of a pit dug in the ground on a small island in

the middle of a pond, and my! how the ducks and geese did fly! I secured a limit bag of twenty-five ducks, namely, sprig, widgeon, spoonbill and teal, and three geese, a honker (13-pound Canada), a speckle breast and a white goose. It is a fact that I could not sleep last Saturday evening until after 1 A. M. due to the incessant noise made by the ducks and geese feeding in the moonlight.

I stayed at one of the clubhouses situated near the middle of about 53,000 acres of overflowed land containing wild celery and rice and upon inquiry as to the number of birds "on hand," was informed that ducks were estimated at about 350,000 and geese about 25,000. My own opinion is that the birds were in larger quantities than those quoted above. Each hunter is located (shown) a blind; sometimes it happens to be a pit dug in the ground; again it may be a sunken iron barrel or perhaps a blind built of wood. I was given a pit and informed not to shoot until 6:30 A. M., an ironclad rule of the club, and while waiting for the time limit, busied myself in arranging things in general about the pit, such as removing old shell boxes, and above five gallons of water from within the pit. This accomplished, it was necessary to rub my hands to start circulation, as the frost was "thick" all around and in the pit.

My first shot of the morning secured me the prize honker. As soon as the guns of nearly 750 hunters rang out at 6:29-30 A. M., a large flock of ducks and geese arose out of the south end of my pond and headed my way. I pulled on the nearest bird and crumpled him up with the first shot. He came so near to falling in my pit that I lost the second shot at that flock and then scrambled out and placed him in position for a decoy.

From that time on the birds flew in large numbers, the teal especially showing "speed" in passing over me. I enjoyed myself immensely that day and was sorry when I laid the last bird (a sprig) with the other twenty-four and then signaled for the keeper to come up with the machine for a three-mile ride "de luxe" to the club-house and real goose dinner.

Coming home in the train, I counted thirty-three limits (twenty-five birds each) of ducks in the smoker, hanging on the sides of the car, a sight, indeed, good to look at.

I shot with a friend at San Pablo last Tuesday and Wednesday. The first day netted up twenty-three birds, one widgeon and twenty-two bluebill. Wednesday we went out and in the teeth of a strong northeaster and a biting and stinging wind, were rewarded with a bag of forty birds by 1 P. M. and then came home. These were all very enjoyable outings to me.

# On Missouri River Bars

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**PERRY C. DARBY**



## ON MISSOURI RIVER BARS

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By Perry C. Darby

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There is something in October sets the gypsy  
blood astir,  
We must rise and follow her,  
When from every hill of flame,  
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

—*Carman.*

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**M**Y old friend Vic Engleman and I were shooting from the same blind on the Missouri River in southwestern Iowa last Fall, when the wind shifted to the northwest and the temperature began to lower rapidly. Soon large flocks of ducks and geese came pouring from the north down the Missouri River valley. They were going south by the thousands.

Our blind was on a point of a sand bar and the current was strong against the bar. All our ducks dropped in the river where the current was swift and Sandy, my Chesapeake Bay dog, did some fine work, retrieving thirty-two ducks and five geese from the ice-cold water. He would never falter for one moment. A pair of red-heads came into the decoys. I killed the drake and only

crippled the hen. She started to swim away from us, with Sandy in pursuit. It was some fine race. The wind was blowing a gale and the waves ran high. At times they would both disappear in the tossing yellow waters but all the times Sandy was drawing closer. Then we saw him catch her and let himself go with the current. Vic said, "He can't make it back" (almost five hundred yards); "he sure will be drowned." But the wise dog that he is, he let himself go with the current and landed nearly three-quarters of a mile below us with the duck. He was nearly exhausted but would not give up. Vic has some good dogs himself, but he said, "I will have to hand it to Sandy as the best dog I have ever seen." My love for this dog is almost a passion. He is never too cold or worn out to make one more try for me. Without him we would get very few ducks on the old Missouri on this part of its course.

#### **Sport With the Geese**

One fine morning last November Vic and I were on one of the many sand bars for which the fabled old Missouri is noted, examining it for signs of geese. We saw where they had been feeding on the new growth of young willows, of which they are very fond. We put out the decoys and dug us a pit and prepared to await their return.



PERRY C. DARBY,

Northboro, Iowa.



As the day was warm, the wind being in the south, we lay in the sand and recounted the many trips we had made together in pursuit of these royal birds, the gamiest of them all. How many we had killed and how they sometimes got away from us. How we had taken our friends with us on these hunts and how excited they would be when the birds were coming in and they could not wait for them to get close enough for a sure shot. It certainly tries the nerves even of the veterans when the big fellows are coming directly towards you. You have to have a steady hand and good eye, as they are not as easy a mark as they seem for so large a bird.

Vic produced his old goose caller, one of his own invention, and he can talk the goose language to perfection. He has talked many an old gander into leading his flock right up to our blind and we taken plenty of toll from them.

“It don’t seem like goose weather to me, it is so warm,” I remarked, as I removed my hunting coat.

“Well, they have been here and will return,” he remarked.

I was leaning against a root, looking to the northwest, when I discovered a long line of geese coming down the river. “Get down!” I exclaimed, “here they come!”

We were both down in an instant. The geese were now about one-half mile west of us, when Vic got his caller to working. They now headed directly for us

about 25 yards high. There were more than a hundred of them, the flock being spread out probably 30 yards in crescent shape, and flying slow they came within about 200 yards, when they discovered the decoys. Then they began to spread, bear off to the south, circling all the time, passing us by over 100 yards too far for a good shot. Around they came again, but were suspicious of those birds on their feeding grounds. Once more they came around again a little closer, when Vic said, "This is their last round; give it to them!" We fired into them, killing only two. We were disappointed to think they would not come any closer.

"Let's go home. We won't get any more shots today," said Vic.

"I don't believe these geese have been using this place," I said. "They were far too suspicious. They were travelers coming from the North. I believe we had better stay awhile and see."

We waited a while longer, guying each other because we didn't get more geese, when we were startled by that thrilling trumpet-like call of the war-worn Wawa, the wizard of the wastes of sand and yellow water, "A-honk! a-honk! honk!"

"Look! Vic! Here comes the geese from the southwest. Here is where we kill some."

They came out over the bar in a straight line, not

over 20 yards high, Vic pleading with them. They discovered they had company and made a big circle to make sure all was well. Four now broke away from the flock and sailed right over our heads so close we could feel the wind from their wings, but they never discovered us at all and alighted just over beyond the decoys. The others made one swing, coming within about 30 yards of us. There was a mighty trumpeting as they drew near. We raised up and with our automatics making good, we got revenge. When it was over, seven fine birds lay in the throes of death stretched on the sand, their ashen breasts upturned.

We felt well repaid for our time and trouble, and were pleased to think we would have something to show to our friends on our return.

“Look!” Vic exclaimed, as he cast his eye toward the vanishing flock, “there goes one down stone dead,” and we saw him disappear behind the willows. “We can get him in the morning.”

“Not so bad for boys,” remarked Vic, as he took me by the hand in his good-natured way, his face wreathed in smiles.

Thus ended for us a day of deepest joy and as the sun was setting behind the clouds there came a last golden reflection of its rays over the saffron waters.

When the gray lake water rushes  
Past the dripping alder bushes,  
    And the bodeful Autumn wind  
In the fir-tree weeps and hushes.

—*Roberts.*

# Audubon, the Naturalist

♦ ♦ ♦

WILLIAM C. HAZELTON



## AUDUBON, THE NATURALIST

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By William C. Hazelton

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Who hath seen the beaver busied? Who hath watched the black-tail mating?  
Who hath lain alone to hear the wild goose cry?  
Who hath worked the chosen water where the ounananiche is waiting,  
Or the sea-trout's jumping-crazy for the fly?

—*Kipling.*

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**A**UDUBON was a man of genius, with the courage of a lion and the simplicity of a child. One scarcely knows which to admire most—the mighty determination which enabled him to carry out his great work in the face of difficulties so huge, or the gentle and guileless sweetness with which he throughout shared his thoughts and aspirations with his wife and children.

The name of Audubon is of French origin; it is extremely rare, and while confined in America to the family of the naturalist, has in France been traced only among his ancestry. His father was one of twenty children, only two of which were boys.

The naturalist was born at Les Cayes, Santo Domingo (now Haiti), on April 26, 1785. He spent his early boy-

hood on his father's plantation near New Orleans, and his earliest recollections are associated with lying among the flowers of that fertile land, sheltered by the orange trees, and watching the movements of the mocking bird, "the king of song," dear to him in after life from many associations.

Audubon was an admirable marksman, a clever rider, an expert swimmer, possessed great activity, prodigious strength, and was notable for the elegance of his figure and the beauty of his features, and he aided nature by a careful attendance to his dress. Besides other accomplishments he was a musician of ability, a good fencer, and danced well.

Audubon had many adventures in the then wild parts of America, making several trips up and down the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, and on one occasion meeting the famous hunter, Daniel Boone, spent the night with him at an inn, and the next day hunting with Boone and saw him perform his feat of barking squirrels. Boone told him many of his thrilling adventures among the Indians.

Audubon also made a trip up the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers and visited among the Indian tribes. He was then between 60 and 70 years of age, and near the end of his life.

"The man's heart was restless; otherwise he would not have achieved so much. He must wander; he must



JOHN JAMES AUDUBON.  
From Healy's Portrait of Audubon.  
Kindness of Ruthven Deane,



vagabondize; he must acquire; he was never quite busy at the hearth. His love for Nature was passionate indeed, pursuing in all regions, burning in him to the last. He was boy-like to the end, glorying most when out of doors.” (Preface to London edition of his works.)

The works of Audubon are pronounced by Baron Cuvier to be “the most splendid monument which art has erected in honor of ornithology.”

Christopher North says, “He was the greatest genius, in his own walk, that ever lived.”

Probably no other undertaking of Audubon’s life illustrates the indomitable character of the man more fully than the work preliminary to the publication of his great work “The Birds of America.” He was in a strange country, England, having gone there with his drawings from America. He had no friends save those he had made in a few months and no money, and yet he entered confidently on this undertaking which was to cost over one hundred thousand dollars, and with no pledge of help, but on the other hand discouragement on all sides, and from his best friends, of the hopelessness of such an enterprise.

Audubon was honored in England and Scotland by Sir Walter Scott, Landseer, the Royal Society and many famous statesmen. Likewise in France by Baron Cuvier, Prince Bonaparte, the Royal Academy and many other notables.

At different periods of his life he earned his livelihood by selling drawings and paintings which he made of the sitters. This talent was most useful to him.

When he went to England he was practically penniless, but had letters of introduction which aided him greatly.

Rufus W. Griswold thus describes Audubon's personal appearance as it was shortly after his return from the Northwest: "I awaited him in his studio and studied the exquisite drawings and paintings scattered everywhere throughout the room. The master now made his appearance. He was a tall, thin man, with a high, arched and serene forehead, and a bright, penetrating gray eye; his white locks fell in clusters upon his shoulders, but were the only signs of age, for his form was erect, and his step as light as that of a deer. The expression of his face was sharp, but noble and commanding, and there was something in it, partly derived from the aquiline nose and partly from the shutting of the mouth, which made you think of the Imperial eagle. His greeting was frank and cordial, and showed you the sincere, true man. The wonderful simplicity of the man was perhaps the most remarkable. His self-forgetfulness was impressive. His unconscious greatness seemed to be only equalled by his child-like tenderness.

"When I left, I said to him, 'I have seen Audubon, and I am very thankful.'

"'You have seen a poor old man,' said he, clasping

my hand in his—and he was then ony 70 years of age. He had measured life by what he had done, and he seemed to himself to be old.

“It is hard to confine one’s self to dates and times when contemplating such a man as Audubon. He belongs to all time. He was born, but he can never die.”

He suffered many hardships during his trips through the wilderness first and last, but never complained.

Edward B. Clark writes: “The simple truth is spoken when it is said that the Audubon societies formed for the protection of the wild bird life of America are carrying forward their work not only in the name of Audubon but in the spirit which was the great naturalist’s guide.

“Some men have said that Audubon was an impractical man, a dreamer. Impractical he was and a dreamer, too, but the world is better for its dreamers. The business man of large affairs looks with a sort of pitying arrogance upon the man who loves the woods rather than the counting house. The man who goes to the woods with a purpose in his heart has chosen the better part. The impractical Audubon will live when those who called him dreamer are forgotten.

“Just as sunset was flooding the pure, snow-covered landscape with golden light, at 5 o’clock on Monday, January 27, 1851, the ‘pard-like spirit, beautiful and swift, outsoared the shadow of our night.’”

The camp-fire is a vulcan forge  
Within whose throbbing glow  
Are welded bands that will not break  
Till Life's tent is laid low.

—*The Last Camp-Fire.*

Governor Emanuel L. Philipp



## **GOVERNOR EMANUEL L. PHILLIPP**

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The State of Wisconsin is most fortunate in possessing a governor who is also a sportsman.

Governor Philipp takes a keen personal interest in the needs of hunters and fishermen throughout the State and is every ready to aid any laws tending to advance the cause of game and fish protection and propagation. He personally attends many conventions of sportsmen's associations in different parts of the State. Wisconsin fish and game laws will compare favorably with those of any State in the Union, and none are better enforced.

Having held the office of governor for three terms, the aid Governor Philipp has been able to render the cause is considerable, and is duly appreciated by the sportsmen of Wisconsin. Would that we had more governors of his type.

Spring shooting of waterfowl was prohibited three years before the passage of the Migratory Bird Law, and has been continuously enforced.

Governor Philipp has a cottage on Bingham Point at Lake Koshkonong and spends some time there each season in relaxation from his official duties.



GOVERNOR EMANUEL L. PHILIPP,  
Madison, Wis.



# The Kleinmans



**ROLLIN B. ORGAN**



## THE KLEINMANS

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By Rollin B. Organ

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We hear of many a trophy won,  
By flood and field with rod and gun.

—*Flagg.*

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AWAY back in the spring of 1844, a young Pennsylvania Dutchman, John Kleinman, with more ambition than money, crossed the Calumet River at "Chittenden's bridge," a few miles south of South Chicago, and found himself traveling north along one of the very worst roads that it was ever his misfortune to follow; his team was almost exhausted, as well as his patience. His little family, consisting of a wife and three small boys, the eldest John J., the next Abraham S., and Henry, the baby, all under five years of age, were huddled together under the white cover of the old-fashioned emigrant wagon. All were tired out with their long journey from the Keystone State. They went

into camp for the night on the first dry ground they came to.

Morning found them in much better condition. The head of the family concluded that he would reconnoiter a little before proceeding farther with his family. After walking a couple of miles he came to a small farmhouse, where he was informed that all of the unoccupied land belonged to the government, and was subject to entry at the enormous price of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre. After carefully considering the question for several months he came to the conclusion that he would take a chance on forty acres, although at that time he could not see his way clear as to how or when he would ever get it paid for. A small house was erected. Two more boys were born, George and William. It was not long before the two oldest began to shoot ducks for the Chicago market at the request of the father. Ammunition was doled out to them very carefully, and they were instructed to make every shot count, as mallard ducks were sold for from seventy-five cents to one dollar per dozen, and canvasbacks were slow at from two to three dollars per dozen. The increase in the family caused a larger house to be erected which was paid for from the proceeds of the sale of ducks.

John J., on arriving at his eighteenth birthday, induced his father to allow him to shift for himself; arrangements were made and John was to pay one dollar

and a half per week for board, furnish his own ammunition, and enjoy the proceeds of the sale of the ducks that he killed. It was a proud day for John when he returned home with nine dollars in his inside pocket, the proceeds of his first sale. He was ambitious, and was desirous of becoming a rich man, was willing to work and was very careful of his earnings.

The gun furnished by his father was not up to John's idea of what such an implement should be. He confided his trouble to George T. Abby, proprietor of a gun store on Lake street, from whom he had purchased ammunition. John was surprised to learn that his credit was good for anything that was in the store. Before he left the store he was the proud possessor of a thirty-dollar gun with stub-and-twist barrels, an immense quantity of ammunition, and all of the necessary accouterments that went to make up a first-class outfit in those days. His greatest trouble now was the unpaid bill of sixty-five dollars that constantly presented itself before his eyes, but he was not long in squaring the account.

As John was six feet one without socks, a regular Apollo Belvidere, and had an eye for the beautiful, he was of the opinion that he could not make t hit with the fair sex unless he was properly clothed. Hying himself to a nearby clothing store he blew in eleven dollars for a suit of black. A white shirt in the window with a Marie Antoinette frill attracted his attention very much.

He did not leave the store without that shirt, but it was a great disappointment to him, as it took an artist to do it up, and South Chicago did not possess one. John appealed to his mother, but in vain, as her education along the line of frills had been sadly neglected; the result was that the frill was removed, and the shirt done duty the same as any other shirt. I am of the opinion that if the shirt was on exhibition today at the Field Museum it would attract much attention, and I think I am safe in saying that he was the best-dressed man in the Calumet district; in fact, about the only man with a white shirt.

As a pigeon shot, John was second to none, considering the great number of contests that he took part in. He shot a great many private matches with Bogardus, and outshot him in a majority of cases.

In 1876, at Dexter Park, Chicago, Samuel H. Terrill gave a tournament in which wild pigeons were used; plunge traps, 21 yards rise, 30 yards boundary, gun below the elbow until the bird was on the wing, one barrel only. Ties were decided at 26 and 31 yards. Many beautiful prizes were offered, among them a watch valued at \$250, donated to be contested for by Charles D. Peacock. The watch was won by John and is still carried by him. At this same tournament the firm of Parker Brothers, through their very popular agent, the late lamented S. A. Tucker, donated one of their finest

breechloading shotguns. This also was won by John, and served him well until his retirement a few years ago.

Many very peculiar matches were pulled off in the old days up at Sunny Side at Tom Stagg's. One in particular I recall wherein John lost what looked to him to be an easy match. Dr. Edwards bet John \$50 that he could not kill twelve Guinea hens out of fifteen, Rhode Island rules. All birds were subject to challenge, and must be retrieved when challenged. The boundary was eighty yards. About one hundred yards from the score was an open fence, three boards high. The first one that left the trap John knocked down with a broken wing; the bird was challenged and was through the fence before John got half way to him. The result was that John lost the match after shooting at eight birds. The Guineas were not only good flyers, but could sprint the hundred yards within ten seconds. After the match was over, John found out that those Guineas' home was on the other side of that fence; they had been in training for several days, and had been shot at many times with dust shot.

John was a member of the Audubon Club, and always shot on the team in club contests. He is now living in Chicago and in good health at the age of 77.

Abraham S., the next son, was a hard man to defeat in a live-bird match. He shot many matches with Bogardus, and invariably held his own. Their first contest

took place at Dexter Park race track in 1869, and resulted in a tie. He shot a large number of single-handed matches and lost but few. Many of his matches with Bogardus were at snow birds. I think that he had as much nerve in a contest as any man that ever faced the traps. The last pigeon match that he ever shot was against that prince of good fellows, Jim Elliott. The score, Kleinman, 92; Elliott, 87.

Abe was a member of the Chicago Shooting Club, and was always on their team in club contests. He was very popular with the shooting fraternity. Abe Kleinman's hand-loaded shells became a synonym for excellence. His favorite gun was a Scott. I have been on a duck marsh with many men, and if I was asked who was the best duck shot that I ever saw, my answer would be that if it was not Abe Kleinman, it was his brother. Abe died last year, aged 74.

Henry Kleinman was one of the best shots that ever faced the traps. In the late 60's or early 70's, the Chicago shooters received a very cordial invitation to attend a pigeon shoot at Crown Point, Indiana. A half dozen of us went down. Henry won first money in the two shoots that he participated in, and the rest of us divided second and third. That was all for Chicago. We were ruled out, and that was the last trap shooting that Henry ever did. As a duck and field shot, he had no superiors and few equals. Outside of the Kleinman family, what

I have said of Abe being the best duck shot, can be said of Henry.

Last but not least, comes George, built on the lines of his brother John, in his prime weighing about 250 pounds. As a pigeon shot, when the contest was ended, his opponent knew that he had been in one. George shot many single-handed matches, and never to my knowledge lost but one. His greatest matches were the three that he shot with Jim Elliott, George winning all three, which was nothing to Elliott's discredit, as no matter who had been his opponent at that time, the result would have been the same.

George's favorite gun was a Maverick, as it was not branded. He picked it up in a wholesale hardware store. I think it was listed at \$29.70, and after receiving the usual discounts of 15, 10 and 5 per cent., he took it home. How it would shoot if correctly pointed!

#### **Jack Winston Does Some Stunts**

I never knew of but one single-handed match lost by George, and that was to the wily Jack Winston, of Indiana, who incidentally dropped off the train at Burnside just at the close of a three days' tournament, and offered to shoot any man on the grounds one hundred birds for one hundred dollars. It looked like easy money for George, and the match was on. Winston was the possessor of some peculiarities that verged on the

eeentric. For instance, before they had shot at ten birds, he was at the traps and had called ready, opened his gun, took out the shells, stepped a few feet to the left where he discovered two empty shells resting on the other. He separated them, facing them outward, went to the score and killed the hardest bird of the match. A short time after he discovered an empty tin can some few feet from the score. Again he called ready, and once more he removed the shells from his gun, picked up the can and very carefully placed it behind a pigeon crate. He indulged in many other eccentricities, much to the amusement of the audience, and easily won the match. He was of the opinion that he was in possession of George's goat. The real cause of the loss of the match was that George had been shooting for three days, was off his stride and got to shooting slow. He was unable to get far enough ahead of his birds, with the result that George had a few dead out of bounds. George was very anxious for another contest, but Winston said that he did not need any more money just then.

This is the same Jack Winston that walked into Frank Parmelee's gun store in Omaha, Nebraska, several years ago with one hundred silver dollars strung out along his left forearm, stubbed his toe and fell headlong on the floor, the dollars scattering. Several of the shooting fraternity were in the store, but Parmelee beat them all to him, and after assisting Jack to his feet, asked him

what he was doing with all of that money. Jack said that he came in to shoot Frank Parmelee one hundred targets for one hundred dollars. Frank was a little astonished, but as soon as he was able to speak said: "I-I-I don't know who you are, but your-r-r on." The match was shot the next day over at Council Bluffs. Score, Winston, 99; Parmelee, 96. Parmelee said that he could not beat a man unless he missed more than one.

### **The Old Calumet Marsh**

I never knew of a better duck marsh than the Calumet was in the early days. It was uncommon for one of the Kleinmans in good ducking weather to kill less than one hundred in a day, many of which were canvasbacks. Within the last four years canvasbacks have been seen in large flocks high above Calumet Lake, and descend in spiral form to the center of the lake, where they feed on wild celery, which still grows there in large quantities.

After an acquaintance of fifty-three years, I take pleasure in saying that I never knew four better shots, nor five more honorable gentlemen, than the Kleinman boys.

Can't you hear the woods a-callin',  
Where the mountain torrent's fallin',  
And the pine-trees and the hemlocks  
Gently sway?

—*Aubrey.*

Forest H. Conover



## FOREST H. CONOVER

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One of the best known and most popular of Canadian sportsmen is Forest H. Conover. Mr. Conover has been a devoted duck shooter all his life, and has never sold game nor fired a pump gun or automatic.

For thirteen years he has been re-elected president of The Essex County Wild Life Conservation Association, of which Jack Miner is vice president. Mr. Conover has been honored by the Dominion Government of Canada with the post of Honorable Superintendent of the Point Pelee National Park of 7,000 acres. Half of this area is an ideal ducking resort.

Mr. Conover is an athlete of considerable prowess. He holds medals for life saving in coast service, as well as the Provincial Championship and two men Team Championship on 100 per cent. score for the Dominion of Canada in trap-shooting.

Any measure tending to protect game is sure of the active and enthusiastic support of Forest Conover.

As a contributor to Rod and Gun in Canada, the American Field and other periodicals Mr. Conover's writings are highly esteemed.

Mr. Conover's home is at "Sea Cliff on the Lake," Leamington, Ontario, Canada.



FOREST H. CONOVER,  
Leamington, Ontario, Canada.  
President Essex County Wild Life Association,



# An Anecdote of Fred Kimble

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**ROLLIN B. ORGAN**



## AN ANECDOTE OF FRED KIMBLE

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By Rollin B. Organ

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Low lies the tawny marsh, and lily-pads,  
All crisped and wrinkled by the Autumn sun,  
Swing lazily against the sighing reeds,  
And rudely against the rising sun.

—*McGaffey.*

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ALL the veterans will remember Fred Kimble, of Peoria, Illinois, who in his day was one of the crack shots of America, both as a duck shot and at the traps. Along with Jim Stice, Charley Budd, L. S. Carter, C. M. Powers, Frank Parmelee and others, he generally got his share of the money at any tournament he attended. I recall an incident that occurred back in the early eighties.

Fred Kimble and Charley Stock were partners in the manufacturing of what was then known as the Peoria blackbird, of which Kimble was the inventor. Kimble was a very quiet sort of fellow whose only diversion, outside of marning money, was his shotgun.

As Stock was a gunsmith, Kimble spent much of his spare time in the back room of Stock's shop trying to

solve the problem of making his gun outshoot the other fellow's via the choke-bore route, and from the distance that he killed live birds, one would think that he had succeeded. His pet gun at that time was an eight bore, single barrel, weighing about nine pounds. The barrels were of laminated steel, a muzzle-loader, put together by Stock under Kimble's instructions. The inside of that gun had received more attention than five ordinary guns. It was a diamond in the rough. The racy appearance of the present-day Parker was conspicuous by its absence, but how it could shoot!

After spending a couple of days targeting it, Kimble hied himself to the tall timber along the Illinois River, where he spent a half day with the mallards in flight over the great oak trees along the river. He succeeded in bagging thirty-two out of thirty-five shots, none of them less than fifty yards high, and some of them at least sixty-five. He came home very much dissatisfied; said that the three that he missed were within sixty yards, and should have been killed; therefore it was the gun that was in fault. Further attention was given the interior and in a short time it was pronounced perfect. Sometime later the annual meeting of The Illinois State Sportsman's Association was held at Peoria. The main events on the program were at live birds, but there was target shooting on the side at Peoria blackbirds. Kimble participated in all the side events, with a clean

score in all but the last, in which he lost the last bird shot at. He was puzzled for a time as to why he lost that target. Seeing Stock coming toward him, and knowing that Stock would demand an explanation of such reckless shooting, he exclaimed: "Charley, do you know what caused me to miss that target?" "I do not," said Charley. "Well, I will tell you," said Fred. "Just as I was about to pull the trigger a fly alighted on the rib of my gun!"

Stock was a man with a great sense of humor, and on his arrival at the shooting ground the next day he brought half a dozen fly-traps and hung them up back of the score a short distance. Kimble discovered them, and asked Stock what they were there for? Stock said that he wanted no more misses!

#### **Kimble as a Duck Shot**

Fred Kimble was probably the most accurate shot at ducks that this country has produced. He has been known to make 100 consecutive shots at ducks and not miss one.

Shortly after the Carver-Bogardus matches I offered to match him against Dr. Carver. The proposition was to shoot two matches; one at 100 live birds, 30 yards rise, one barrel; and the other at 100 birds, 30 yards, the shooter to use any gun he wished. I posted a forfeit, but Carver would not accept.

Dreaming dreams with fancy laden—  
    Dreams I've often dreamed before—  
Harking back to other woodlands,  
    Other days that come no more.

—*Whipple.*

Daniel W. Voorhees, Jr.



## **DANIEL W. VOORHEES, JR.**

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D. W. Voorhees, Jr., better known in the trap-shooting world as "Danny," is always an important factor to reckon with in any tournament. He is a member of the exclusive shooting "Tribe of Indians."

All the shooters attending the "Indian Shoot" at Lake Harbor, Michigan, in 1917, will remember how "Chief Good Fellow" closed the tournament in a blaze of glory, scoring one hundred per cent. on the last day, breaking every target thrown to him in that day's program and stopping with a run of 125 straight. Part of these targets were from 20 yards.

Young Mr. Voorhees is also a high-class live-bird shot. He was selected as one of five to represent the great State of Illinois in the National Team Championship on live birds, held at Kansas City, in February, 1917. There were twelve states represented with teams. The result is a matter of record, showing victory and championship for the "Sucker State" (Illinois), Mr. Voorhees' score on live birds being equal to any individual on the team.

He has been an ardent duck hunter, having shot ducks since he was 8 years of age.



DANIEL W. VOORHEES, Jr.,

Peoria, Ill.

Secretary-Treasurer The Duck Island Preserve.



### Winning the Diamond Badge

[From THE AMERICAN FIELD.]

At the Illinois State Tournament at Peoria, Illinois, June 10-14, 1918, there were 105 entries for the Chicago Board of Trade diamond badge, valued at Six Thousand Dollars. This was open to all shooters in the State of Illinois, both professional and amateur—a handicap event. The winning of this to demonstrate the champion shot of the State. There were 105 entries. No likely winning scores were turned in until the eleventh squad finished, when it was found that C. M. Powers, a 22-yard man, had broken 96, but it was also noticed that D. W. Voorhees, Jr., of Peoria, in the sixteenth squad, was only one down in his first seventy-five, and as he was shooting in perfect form, a crowd collected to watch him in the last event. Absolutely oblivious of everything but the work on hand, Dannie kept pegging away until the referee called "dead" for the twenty-fifth target, and he went out with 99, as fine an exhibition of nerve and skill as is seldom seen at the trap. He stood at 19 yards, a handicap of 3 yards, thereby winning the championship of the State of Illinois over both professionals and amateurs.

He marks the lowering cloud-wracks flights,  
When spurned before the rising gale,  
The homing fisher-fleet, close-reefed,  
Drives up the channel, sail by sail.

—*The Old Decoy Duck.*

# A Texas Duck Hunt and a New Kind of Retriever

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**TOM A. MARSHALL**



## A TEXAS DUCK HUNT AND A NEW KIND OF RETRIEVER

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By Tom A. Marshall

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Now the Four-Way Lodge is opened, now the Hunting Winds are loose—  
Now the Smokes of Spring go up to clear the brain;  
Now the Young Men's hearts are troubled for the whisper of the Trees,  
Now the Red Gods make their medicine again!

—*Kipling.*

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**D**ICK MERRILL, of Milwaukee, one of the best all-around sportsmen in America, and one of the best game locators in the world, adopted Rockport, Texas, as his Winter home. There he has the celebrated power boat Beatrice M., where Fred Gilbert and the writer were entertained for a week, cruising the bays and bayous, killing the limit of birds each and every day, scoring on no variety except redheads.

Merrill had as a slush cook a darkey called "Nigger Tom." He was as much at home in the water as a Catalina Island seal. During the time between flights he would loaf in the boat with us, noting carefully the fall of the birds and immediately starting in pursuit. He swam high in the water, moving rapidly ahead with the Australian crawl stroke. His velocity was such that he would slip many a surprise over on a wounded duck before it knew of the darkey's proximity.

When gathering, if a flock headed in toward our decoys, Nigger Tom would flop over on his back, with nothing but his little round face exposed. He had every appearance of a float on the cork line of a seine. If a duck was wounded he carried a sawed-off shotgun out to sea with him, which he fired most accurately on escaping birds.

With our punt boat made stationary, our boat blind covered with reeds and tules, and our decoys located in such a position that the ducks, when decoying, came up against the wind, it was seldom we sent Tom out after a cripple. We usually snuffed out their duck lives at once.

The surroundings and success of this hunt were all that any sportsman's heart could wish or desire. The cabin cruiser was palatial in every appointment. No little accessory or refinement had been overlooked that could have added in any way to our comfort or pleasure.

#### **The Old Timers' Story**

Gather in now, you old timers! Here comes a story from one you have shot with at the traps, been entertained by, remember for his congenial, cheerful and sunny disposition. He is a man who never let a friend get by without an invitation to be wined and dined by himself and good wife at their home. Capt. W. Y. Sedam, formerly of Omaha, now a resident of Rockport, Texas, is the man.

Captain Sedam selected Rockport for a home because it was the game and fishing Mecca for the sportsmen of the world, where they all gather to try conclusions. It is known as the best point on the gulf coast for duck shooting. This is the country selected by Captain Sedam for a permanent home. It was while entertaining Gilbert and me that the captain spun his duck story, which I push along to you old timers. We were seated at his table. He was looking hale and hearty, although he confessed to having passed the three score and ten period and was then living on borrowed time.

The captain then told of a duck hunt, in company with that old veteran trap shot and all-around character, Frank Parmelee of Omaha, who at one time was known to almost every trap shot in America. He was a member of the all-American team which shot abroad in 1901.

“The hunt took place at Saint Joe Island, Texas, a few years since,” Captain Sedam said. “As a third member of the party we had the game warden—as a safety proposition. We borrowed a team of mules and a wagon from my old friend Sam Allyn, then drove about six miles up through the island to a swale, which was about 150 yards long and 60 feet wide, the water ranging from 6 in inches to 1 foot in depth.

“We chased thousands of ducks from this smartweed puddle and knew they would return to feed in the very near future. Our blinds were built about seventy-five yards apart, which gave us perfect command of the

pond. The birds commenced to return. They came singly, in pairs, flocks and swarms.

“The game warden was our official retriever. He tore up his union card and worked overtime. Chief Buffalo Hump (Parmelee) turned loose the heavy artillery and proved himself an artist with a scatter gun. There was no shot too difficult for him to attempt and successfully execute. He was a duck artist from every angle.

“When our human retriever evinced signs of weakening we immediately tossed into his system a little ‘elixir of pep,’ which eliminated the tired feeling. He again went bounding over the bogs, prairies and into the water after our birds. When the grand summary was made we had seventy-four ducks and eight geese. This was no reflection on our game warden, as the game limit was high in those days.”

The following day the captain took his birds in to San Antonio, where he gave a series of duck dinners at the Neuces Hotel in honor of his old friend Dick Merrill and wife.

Rockport Bay, except in time of storm, is so completely landlocked that it presents a mirrorlike surface, very inviting for the holding of duck conventions and conclaves.

Fred Gilbert, Dick Merrill and the plaintiff lingered around Rockport for several days. We pronounced it the duck’s paradise.

Charles L. Dering

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## CHARLES L. DERING

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This is a picture of Charles L. Dering of Chicago. Mr. Dering comes of a family of sportsmen. His father, Mr. P. Frederick Dering, was in his day a crack wing shot, as was his uncle, Captain Oscar M. Dering. Captain Dering back in the old days held a record of fifty double rises on wild pigeons, a straight string of one hundred birds.

It is easy to see from this where *his* son, Guy V. Dering, came by his shooting eye. Guy is well known to trap shots all over the country, and is a Grand American Handicap winner.

Mr. C. L. Dering is not much on the trap shooting, but he does enjoy the out-of-doors and the splash of the old he-mallard at the crack of his 20-gauge is music in his ears.

Mrs. C. L. is quite handy with the "gas-pipe" gun, but admits growing a bit tender hearted as the years pass—says she would rather look at them and take their pictures than make them ready for the broiler. Anyhow, golf is more Mrs. Dering's game; she was twice Western champion, but like the rest of the family, anything out-of-doors looks good to her.

Mr. Dering is president of the Clear Lake Outing Club on the Illinois River.



CHARLES L. DERING.

Chicago, Ill.

"A big day on the Illinois River."



# After Greenheads in Alberta

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**PAUL E. PAGE**



## AFTER GREENHEADS IN ALBERTA

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By Paul E. Page

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Mallards packed like the hiving bees  
Climbing high o'er the sundown seas:  
Seasons gathering one by one,  
Forty-three years I've followed the gun.

—McGaffey.

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**M**Y early boyhood was spent near the Horicon marsh, in Wisconsin, on the outskirts of which I was born and raised. Full many a day have I pushed a canoe into the rice and studied the little people of that then great expanse of aquatic life.

Nature was my teacher, for there were few books on hunting at that time.

I trapped on this great marsh with the Indians, too, and saw them gradually melt away to the West. I have shot ducks and geese all through the Northwest since the early '70s, and have shot 10,000 shells in a season at game. But this story is of a recent modern duck hunt, a story of the birds in the fat living of the Canadian grain fields.

On a beautiful day last October I stepped off a train at an Alberta siding in Canada with a letter of intro-

duction to a farmer who was supposed to knew every duck and goose in Alberta by its first name.

I found Mr. Farmer had just left town for an unknown time and as I had only the balance of that day and the next until 6 P. M. in which to shoot, I was up against it, as I knew absolutely nothing of the country.

I met a young fellow, who had been listening to my efforts to get information, who told me if I wanted ducks to come out on his place as there were millions there. I tried to get him down to facts as to how many flocks came into his wheat field in a day, but he could not grasp the flock question and I found out later why.

He told me that he was on a rented farm, one and one-half miles from town, so I took a chance and went with him.

When we drove by the field in which he said there were millions not a duck was to be seen. About one-half mile away I saw a number of ducks flying over a clump of brush and asked him what was over there, and he told me that there were three lakes located there and that the ducks were flying from lake to lake, but not many. I told him to drive over, after I got my gun and shells unpacked. When I got up where I could see what was going on I found a lake of about 40 acres and one of about 20, with a little rise of ground between covered with brush and heavy slough grass. I got out of the wagon and the boy started home, with the under-

standing that he was to return for me at dark. I walked out between the lakes and had twelve greenheads in the grass before he got the team turned around. I spent an hour hunting for them and did not find one, as I had no dog. I told myself that would not do and looked around for another location. Beyond the further lake a wheat field came down close to the lake and the ducks were flying over the lake and into the field. I waded the lake over to the field and on my way over shot six mallards that I dropped in the water and secured. I went into the field and built a blind out of the grain shocks and set my dead ducks on other shocks as decoys.

In a moment the flight started, and although I have seen ducks in Wisconsin, Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska as far back as 1876, where there were as thick as I ever supposed they could be, I must confess that I had never known what ducks in numbers were. They came into that field just as they arose in a mass from some little lake perhaps twenty miles away and from hundreds of other lakes near and far away, in flocks a half mile long and a quarter mile wide. Birds that had never been shot at and had never seen a man, thousands and millions of them, and every one an overgrown grain-fed mallard. I did not see a duck of another kind in the two days' shoot. My only regret was that I did not have my 22 automatic, as the 16 gauge was too tame.

To give you an idea of what it was like, will say that I believe I have the record with a 16-gauge pump with

nine mallards with the six shots. Got six at another time. When I got the nine the bunch flew completely around me and I could have put in several more shots had I have had another gun. They came in, all of them, about ten feet above the stubble, with wings set and legs dangling, and one glance at my dead decoys brought them pell-mell right on top of me. The only time there was any rushing or jumping was when four or more flocks tried to alight in the same place at the same time. I think I shot as many birds while I was out of the blind gathering up the dead ducks as I did when I was under cover. They could not see anything but those dead ducks on the shocks and the prospect for some good eats.

Next day I went out to the lake and made a blind in a muskrat house. The first shot my gun went on the blink and I had to shoot a single-shot gun until noon. I went up to the house for lunch and took the gun apart and found two screws, one bolt and three springs broken. I patched it up with a match, some wire and a small nail and got it to working fine (in the house). I went back to the lake and at the first shot the wire went one way, the match the other, and the nail may be going yet for all I know. I shot a single shot the rest of the day and in addition had to hold up the carriage with the fingers of my left hand to get it to work at all. Some shooting, however. The ducks came in to rest and I dropped them in clear water, and every time I waited for chances to get doubles and triples with one shot. I will admit I played the hog, but there appears to be an understand-



PAUL E. PAGE,  
Eagle Gorge, Wash.  
Shannon River Ducking Club.



ing with the shooters and game wardens that a man is entitled to 200 ducks in a season, and if he wants to kill his season's shoot in one day he can do so.

On the second day, while shooting from the rat house, I noticed a fringe of brush about a quarter of a mile from me and at no time during the day when I looked in that direction did I fail to see a long string, not a flock, of ducks going over the brush. These strings of ducks were from a quarter to a half mile long, thousands of them in each string. I do not know what was on the other side of the brush, but presume it must have been a wheat field. There were so many birds coming into the lake where I was that I did not take the trouble to go over and learn what the attraction beyond the brush was.

One of the greenheads I shot was as large as a small brant. He was just like some that we get on our Sound preserve in Washington and which come from the cross between the Rouen duck and mallard drake. Very strange if he was raised on our preserve and then shot by me in faraway Alberta.

I have hunted ducks since 1876 and I truly believe I saw more mallards in the two days' shoot than I have seen in the combined years since I shot my first bird.

I learned why the boy on the farm could not tell me how many flocks came into the field a day. When they got to his field there was no flock left, just ducks in all directions, and then some more. Do you wonder that I am a little lonesome for the smell of that marsh today?

No faint alarm of distant guns,  
That wake the halcyon's clamorous brood,  
Or thunder on the bridge of hooves,  
Shall rouse him from his timeless mood.

—*The Old Decoy Duck.*

# Dr. Thomas Henry Lewis



## DR. THOMAS HENRY LEWIS

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Here's Dr. Thomas Henry Lewis, the noted physician of Chicago. It is unnecessary to tell you who he is, for every man, woman and child who ever attended the big shoots in the past ten years knows the Doctor, for he is like the strawberry; after the fellow ate it, he exclaimed: "Maybe God Almighty could make a better berry, but so far he has never done it." The Doctor might be improved on, but he never has. Always the same gracious, affable, considerate, kindly soul who loves his fellowman, and fully exemplifies "Thou art Thy brother's keeper."

In the many long years of happy acquaintance and under most trying and irritating conditions, no word of worry or censure—in fact, Dr. Thomas Henry Lewis was never known to speak ill of anyone. He is popular at all the shoots, and takes his place among the 95 per cent. amateurs with becoming grace and modesty. Recently he showed his prowess by winning the Lincoln Park Trophy with a 96 per cent. performance. He belongs to those exclusive shooting fraternities, the Okoboji Indians, South Shore Country Club, Lincoln Park and Duck Island Clubs. He enjoys outdoor sport, field and marsh shooting, loves to commune with nature, and is as happy as John Burroughs when in close touch with wild life and its surroundings.

To know the Doctor well is to make yourself happier. Should more be said?



DR. THOMAS HENRY LEWIS.

Chicago, Ill.

South Shore Country Club.



# Duck Shooting on the Illinois River

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**WILLIAM C. HAZELTON**



## DUCK SHOOTING ON THE ILLINOIS RIVER

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By William C. Hazelton

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O the fire-flash and the star-dust and the wind among the leaves,  
And the mystery of all the secret night;  
And the beauty close about us that our mother Nature weaves,  
And the sweetness that she pours for our delight!

—Fiske.

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**B**EARDSTOWN, Browning, Liverpool, Chillicothe, Rome, Henry, Hennepin, Havana and Lacon! Famous towns for wildfowl on the Illinois River. How many tens of thousands of ducks have been brought away from these towns on the Illinois first and last! The Mecca of several generations of duck hunters.

What a grand stream and what pleasant memories of days of glorious sport the mere mention of the magic name brings to legions of wildfowlers everywhere throughout our beloved land from the days of Van Dyke down to those of the latest new recruit who spent his first happy days upon it during our last beautiful Autumn! Can one who has once tasted of its pleasures ever forget it? Do you wonder that the veterans love to go over again in memory the joys of days gone by?

Can you blame them? What a thrill it gives you to see the gleam of its generous channel again after an absence! The splendid skyline of its timbered shores, the beautiful islands and bayous and the tree-clad bluffs, at times near by and at other times hazy on the distant horizon! A feeling of gratefulness comes over me when I again find myself on its broad bosom, scanning the vista of blue waters, with its reflections of blue and white clouds.

### A Bluebill Shoot

On a fine October forenoon I was approaching the Copperas Creek dam on the Illinois after a long journey. The river men further up the river said there was a good stage of water and I could go right "over the top." I found it true. Early in the morning it had been so foggy that I could not see across the river. Now, however, it had cleared up and the sun was shining. Soon after passing over the dam I began to see large flocks of bluebills ahead of me on the river.

"Now here is where the old hunter makes some observations for future use," I said to myself. "I can use those fellows later on," and I did. Of course, bluebills were not mallards, but they would answer for some sport until I learned the overflowed country a little, as I had never shot in this locality before.

I went on down to Liverpool (some six or seven miles), as I wanted to rest a little and get the lay of the country.



SCENE ON THE ILLINOIS RIVER NEAR ROME, ILL.



There are a large number of lakes and overflowed land on both sides of the river for ten miles above and below Liverpool.

The next morning, having made arrangements to make my headquarters at Liverpool, about 8 o'clock I started up the river with about twenty canvasback decoys in my boat.

There was some shooting going on both up and down the river and much quacking by the live decoys along the river front at Liverpool confined in the large crate-like pens, open at the top, with one end on shore and the other in the water.

After rowing about six miles I reached the lower end of Senate Island. This island is nearly a half mile long, lying closest to the west bank, and curved its entire length in crescent shape, following a bend in the river.

The bluebills were working along the outer edge of the island. A large oak tree had fallen into the river and lay with one end on shore and the other extending out into the river 25 or 30 feet, with branches about 10 or 15 feet above the water. I set my decoys out just below the tree, rowed in among the branches and shot out of my boat instead of from the bank. The birds were flying well and I got the limit in a few hours. They were the greater scaup, fat, and many of them nearly as large as redheads. Later on I shot from further down on the island a couple of times. Others were also

shooting there, and finally the birds became wise; they would swing in at top speed and just outside of the outermost decoys and that would be your only chance. Not very easy to hit under such conditions, either.

Coming down the river when about a half mile below where I had been shooting, a fellow living on a cabin-boat hailed me and started to talk to me. He asked me where I came from. I told him from up the river 175 miles. "Well," he said, "you came a long ways to shoot bluebills." "Yes," I said. "I shoot them sometimes. I am not the only one. I wanted to get acquainted with the country a little. Tomorrow I am going after the big ducks."

### **A Duck Stalk**

On my trip down the river the first day, when about a mile below Grist Island, I saw a flock of bluebills feeding near shore. Backing my boat quietly in before they had seen me, I thought I would try and get a shot from the bank at them by going back in the woods and coming out opposite to them.

There was an oat stubble-field along the top of the bank for some distance, with a fringe of timber along the river. It was excellent walking.

Directly a farmer came towards me carrying a gun. He was on the same mission I was, as I found. He said he had seen a flock of mallards alight along the bank. He suggested that we go together and try and get a



WILLIAM C. HAZELTON,

Chicago, Ill.



shot jointly and divide up if we got any ducks. I agreed and we went back some distance, made a *detour*, and came out opposite the ducks. Then we saw that there were mallards, teal, sprigs and bluebills scattered along the bank for a hundred yards. It was a regular family party and it was a shame to disturb them.

They began to get uneasy, as some of them further out saw us. The farmer was for getting nearer, but I told him no, we had better take the chance we had. So we opened fire simultaneously. We got down five mallards, three dead and two wounded. The farmer re-shot one of the winged ones, waded out and picked up a nice mallard hen that was near shore and said: "You can have the rest. I have to go back to where I left my team up in the woods."

My boat was some distance back, the current is fairly strong along this part of the river and by the time I had overtaken the ducks they had floated a half mile and were on the other side of the river, carried there by the stiff wind blowing. I gathered three of them. The fourth one was a female mallard swimming down the middle of the river with her head up. I knew from her actions that she could fly. One of these strange things that happen in duck shooting. A shot had probably grazed the skull, temporarily dazing her. I backed quietly toward her, splashed a little with the oar, and when she sprang into the air, gave her a finishing shot.

**Shooting in the Overflow**

Shooting in the overflow, part of the time I used decoys and at the other times not. Much of it is flight shooting. Overhead shooting I like best of all.

I bagged mallards, pintails, widgeons, baldpates, teal, bluebills and a few redheads. The bluebills were shot on the river over decoys. Bluebills frequent the main river and overflow also, but the other ducks only occur in the overflow. Thousands of ducks pass daily between the different preserves. One of the pleasures of hunting to me is to hear the ducks of different varieties talking to each other as they fly back and forth. It takes me back to old days again.

The most striking feature of these lakes or overflowed land is the dead trees, standing stark upright in the water—a replica of Reelfoot Lake.

Every evening we would gather at some camp and tell stories and compare the day's experiences. I enjoyed it.

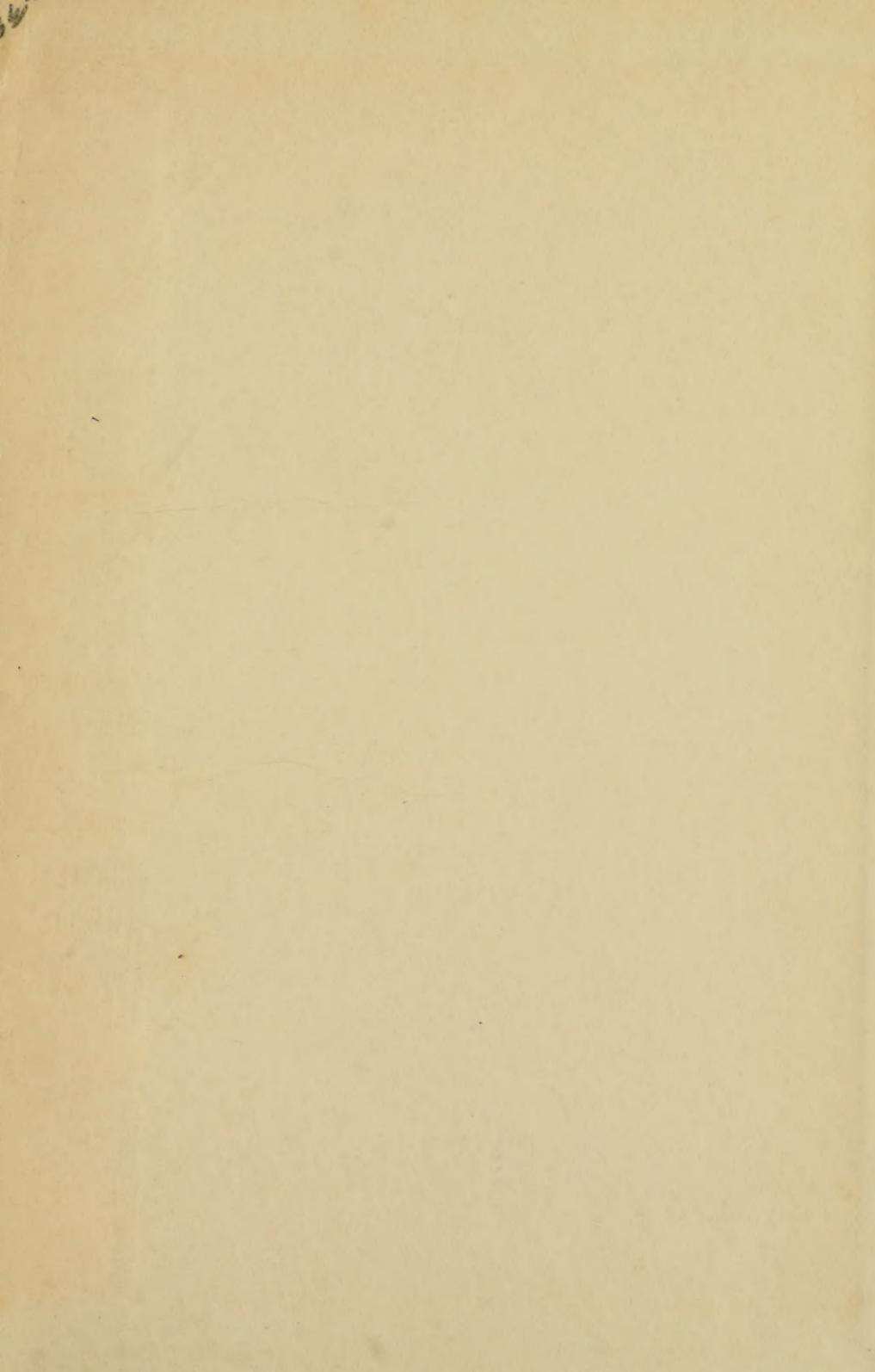
I was sorry when the time came to return home. As to my success, besides sending birds to my friends in Chicago while I was away, I brought in plenty on my return.

Ducking is one of the grandest of sports and its devotees are men of the finest personality, so it is an honor to be one of the craft.

My sincerest wish is that you may enjoy your next hunting trip to the same extent that I did my last one. I wish you all the best of luck!









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Ducking days :